It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You

PebblesandStones

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It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You

By PebblesandStones

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Chapter 1

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 1

"How dare you ruin my science project?!! Is this your payback for what I did to yours? It was an accident and I already fixed it right? What's your problem huh?!" I yelled at the guy I loathe in like forever.

I know that this day will come, my limit was met beyond the line and I will suddenly burst with my outrage anytime. But I didn't expect it now; in front of everyone eating their lunch and looking at me burst with my anger. Well, I don't care about them anymore because I'm seriously mad at this guy in front of me who's eating his sandwich as calm as ever. Wanna know why I'm acting like this? It's because...

1 hour ago...

"Alright Ms. Parker, show me your science project." Mr. Hopkins instructed me.

I made this science project for almost two months with so much hard work and preparation because this will serve as our final exam for this semester. I have to pass and get a high-grade with this project to maintain my scholarship grant.

My family's not that rich but I entered this prestigious private high school, Van Allen Academy, through the full- scholarship grant they offered me because of my mom. My mom was a teacher here for almost 12 years until she died in this school. It's actually a long story on how she died in here but I'll tell you soon, not now. The school granted me the scholarship but I should maintain the grade not lower than 3.50. Thank God I'm able to meet the standards and my dad was so proud of that and my mom would be too wherever she is.

Back to the main story. I started running my project and it worked out smoothly at first. Smoothly at FIRST. Then we started hearing odd sounds coming

from my project until it broke open and the slime inside burst onto Mr. Hopkins' face and lab gown.

Mr. Hopkins' was shocked because he expected me to have a good project but I disappointed him. He wiped the slime off his face and said to me, "Ms. Parker what happened? I thought you will give me something good. Remember, the grade that you'll receive here will be your final exam's grade as well. Don't worry, you still have time until tomorrow morning to fix this and pass it to me." He said to me and said to the class in general, "Tomorrow morning will be the last time I'll accept projects. No more, no less. You may have your lunch now." he finished as the school bell rang.

What happened to my two months of hard work? It all ended up in a big mess. I have to start from the beginning again and I don't know how to do it with the given time of less than 24 hours?

"Sydney, aren't you going to take your lunch?" Mr. Hopkins asked as he was about to leave the lab. I didn't notice that I was the only student left and was staring at my ruined project.

"Later sir. I'll try to fix this up and then I'll go take my lunch. You can go ahead. I'll just be the one to close the lights and doors." I said.

"Alright. I understand what you feel, but you have to be able to pass it tomorrow because I really need to check it right away." he said.

I just nodded and he left. I examined my project intently, until I saw a paper inserted under my project. The note read:

"Hey, what's up? How did your project go? It's awesome right? I know, I know. I'm genius; you don't have to thank me for it. Now we're already even and equal regarding this project. I wish I were there to see your red angry face. Hahaha... See ya later...

-Your, EQUAL PARTNER aka Mr. Drop Dead Gorgeous :)"

Back to the present at the cafeteria

That's what happened an hour ago and the reason why I'm acting like this. My equal partner ruined my science project that I worked hard for two months.

My equal partner. Blake Collins. I'll tell you soon why we're equal partners.

Blake didn't seem to mind that I was yelling at him and that he still has the appetite to eat his lunch calmly. He seemed to enjoy my outburst.

"What's your problem huh?" I asked him again.

He stood up and smirked and simply said, "You." and smirked wider.

I can't take this jerk playing with me. In the past, I can still handle the things he did to, all his bullying, all his insults but now, I can't take it anymore. I took one step back, inhaled sharply and threw my fist onto his face. My punch was so hard that my knuckles hurt like hell but I don't care since he fell on the floor touching his bleeding mouth. That felt really, really good. I felt like I lost tons of my weight from my body. My chest feels so light and...

"WHAT IS HAPPENING?!" Mrs. Anderson, the school principal yelled through the crowd forming around us. I looked at her shocked expression looking at me and Blake on the floor. I've never been so scared in

my life after my mom died and my sore knuckles started to tremble. She saw my trembling sore knuckles and stared at me intently.

"Ms. Sydney Parker, to the principal's office, NOW!" she yelled at me. "You kids bring Mr. Collins to the nurse's office." she told Blake's other friends. "And Mr. Collins, come to my office after the nurse has already attended to you." She said to Blake. She turned to me and motioned her head for me to follow her. I followed her knowing that something bad awaits for me in the office.

We now entered the office and she asked me to sit. I've been in this office when they gave me the scholarship and that's the first and the last time I went here. Nothing has change except for the number of trophies the school received after winning some competitions I don't know what.

She started telling me that violence is strictly prohibited in this school. She told me that I am studying in a prestigious school and I should act accordingly blah blah blah... I didn't listen much of

what she was saying because I already read those things in the school manual.

I just nodded and looked down wishing and praying that she won't mention the thing I'm scared of her to say...

"And as for the consequences of your behavior, I'm giving you a week of detention after class next week, suspension on the night of the dance and we will take back your scholarship grant." she said officiously.

With her last statement, my head snapped up in attention. WHAT? I only punched the guy, who really deserved one by the way, and my scholarship will just be taken away just like that? JUST LIKE THAT? I said pleadingly, "Mrs. Anderson, please not the scholarship grant. Please, I have a very valid reason for what I did and I can explain everything to you. You know we can't afford to pay the school fees and that's why we're relying on that scholarship so that I could study here. Please Mrs. Anderson, you can give me a whole month of detention and suspend me in all school events but please not the scholarship." I asked tears starting to form in my eyes.

"I'm sorry Ms. Parker but rules are rules. I already mentioned that to you before you started studying here. I'm sorry to disappoint you and your mother. I know how much she wants you to graduate here but I can't break the rules. I would like to talk to your father later here in my office," she pasued. "Oh, there you are Mr. Collins, please come in. You may call your father now, Ms. Parker." she said as I nodded my head and walked out with my head down.

My tears made my vision blurry but I can see Blake looking at me. I glared up at him as he entered the office. I looked for a place where I can be alone and I thought of going to the lab. I didn't lock it and I know that the next class in there will still be in 2 hours from now. I can have the lab all to myself in the remaining time. I don't feel like attending my next class anyways. I went inside and sat in a corner and called my dad.

"Hey dad." I said trying to stop my sob.

"Hey Syd. What's wrong? Why are you crying?" my dad replied. He knows me too well. Why wouldn't he? We lived together with my whole 17 years of

existence and he was the one who raised me up when my mom died when I was 7. He's my only family I have who continually supported me all along that's why we're very close to each other. I've got to tell him now.

"Dad, I don't want to disappoint you but I just did what I think was right..." I said and told him the whole story. I know he's also having his lunch at his work right now but he didn't mind me consuming his time. He works as a sales employee in a car company. His salary was just enough for us to have normal life but not enough to make me study in Van Allen Academy. "You know that I accidentally tripped over his science project and you also know that I spent the whole last night just to fix his project so that he would be able to pass it today. I just had a 5-hour sleep just for that and now this is what I get! He really deserved that punch!"

"I understand you Syd, but I think what you did was wrong." he said as I finished telling him the whole thing. I didn't respond because I was already sobbing. "Hey listen, I'm not saying that what Blake

did was right. Both of you were wrong. Using violence is not a good thing Syd. You could just have talked and tell him that what he did was wrong."

"It was still all his fault dad. I put all my time, effort, patience and perseverance in that two month-project so that I could maintain my grade, maintain my scholarship, but it all ended up like this. It's all because of that stupid-dumb-ass-idiot-moron-bastard-jerk! He really deserved that punch. If Mrs. Anderson didn't come, I could've kicked his ass!" I said angrily between sobs but my dad just laughed.

"Don't worry about it Syd. I'll talk to your principal later regarding that matter." he said as his laugh faded, "And as for the scholarship, I don't know. I'll just work extra hard so that you can still study there."

"I know that mom's last wish before she died was that I would be able to finish my high school here. The administrators heard that last wish and because mom was a loyal and a good teacher here, they granted her wish and the school gave us the scholarship knowing that I can't afford to study here.

And now that they took the scholarship back because of me punching a jerk, I can just study in a public school you know." I said knowing what he'll say next..

"Syd, how many times should we talk about this? I told you I will do anything so that you can finish your high school there. Besides you're already a junior, one year left and you're off to college. We can handle that." he paused and continued, "Your mother's family is rich while I'm not but she still agreed to marry me because we love each other. I'm not that rich that's why I didn't have the chance to give your mother a leisure-full life but she didn't mind. She didn't wish anything but for you to graduate in the school she used to study in, the school she used to teach in, the school she used to love and where we first met." he said as I started crying again. Every time my dad talks about how much he loves my mom, I can't stop crying.

"I guess I couldn't object with that anymore. I guess I'll have to baby sit all the kids in the neighborhood to earn money for my school fees. Well, alright dad, I know I'm consuming most of your lunch time so I'm

surrendering. Just come here later after class. I'll see you later dad." I said trying to cheer up myself by thinking that dad will be by my side when I'm asked for confrontation later in the office.

"Alright, see you later Syd. Bye, love you."

"Love you too."

I sat there for a moment, thinking on how to earn money to help my dad pay our future fees. I stopped crying and stood up and went to my ruined project. I tried to fix it but it kept on falling. I didn't stop and continued my work until I heard some movements outside the lab...

"Who's there?" I asked but no one answered. All of the students are supposed to be in their respective classrooms now since the final bell rang 10 minutes ago. I heard the shuffling noise again and this time, I walked slowly to the slightly ajar door and pulled it open to see...

Chapter 2

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 2

Blake's POV

I didn't expect things to turn out like this. I was just playing our little game and I never thought any of these things were to happen.

I know that Sydney spent her whole night finishing my science project, that she tripped over with yesterday because of her clumsiness, so that I could pass it today. I know it of course. We're neighbors and my room is just across hers and I saw her from her window fixing it carefully on her desk. She didn't leave her room the whole night until she finished past midnight. She handed it to me this morning

without a word. My project was well-fixed and looks better than the original one.

And now what did I give her back? I dissemble the parts of her project. I thought I was just doing the usual things between us when something happened and is to the other's blame, I didn't thought she'd be angry and punch me like that! Worst part was, Mrs. Anderson saw her and asked her to go the principal's office.

My friends helped up me go to the nurse's office but I refused and just went to the rest room to wash my face and went straight to the principal's office. I heard Sydney begging for something but I don't get it at first until Mrs. Anderson saw me and asked me to come in and Syd walked out. She glared at me and I can tell that she was about to cry so hard. The talk with Mrs. Anderson was not long because she had an emergency meeting so I'll just return after class.

Here I am now. Outside the science lab listening to Sydney's sobs after she talked to her father. I heard almost everything from after she called me a stupid-dumb-ass-idiot-moron-bastard-jerk. That hurts a lot

but I don't care, I paid attention to their conversation until she started talking about her scholarship being taken back because of punching me and her mom's last wish before she died... I didn't mean to eavesdrop but I want to know what kept her begging like that and it was her scholarship being taken back. With that being taken, she won't be able to attend this school anymore and her mom's wish being unfulfilled.

I'm now totally doomed. Guilt overpowering me and I can't take this anymore! I know that I don't have anything to do with Syd but with her situation right now, I just want to hug and comfort her and tell her that everything's going to be okay. But man! I can't do that! She really loathes me ever since we met and with what I did awhile ago, I don't think she'll like me doing that. Besides her boyfriend, Justin- oh I totally don't like that guy! - should comfort her.

She stopped crying and went to fix her own project when I got tired of my position. I was sitting on the floor for many minutes and my legs got stiff so I stretched them and made a wrong move. The sound

of my stretching with my shoes screechinh echoed across the hallway and she seemed to hear it.

Crap! She's coming for the door! I stumbled to get up and pick up my things and walk away. As I turned the corner to another hallway, sure that she didn't see me, I noticed something missing...

Sydney's POV

I went to open the door to see an empty hallway. I thought it was just the shuffling of tress outside and head to close the door again. As I looked down, something caught my eye.

I picked it up and raised it up to see a silver bracelet. It's a unisex bracelet and I thought it was somehow familiar so I examined it closely. I saw a plate with words inscribed on it: Guardian Angel. S. H. P.

I gasp. This is the one my mom gave me before she died but I also gave it to someone who once saved my life the time before my mom died years ago. Could this mean that that person is also here?

"Sydney, everything's going to be fine, alright?" my dad assured me as we're standing outside the principal's office. I just nodded and he went in alone with Mrs. Anderson asking me to stay outside.

I waited impatiently leaning on the door so that I could hear what they're talking about when the person who caused this entire problem came. He seemed frantic and eager to look for something that he didn't notice that I was standing there when he stepped on my foot.

"Watch out jerk!" I yelled.

He didn't bother to respond when his eyes landed on the bracelet I'm wearing right now. It was the bracelet I found awhile ago outside the science lab. He instantly snatched it out of my wrist with his eyes full of intensity.

"What's your problem, man?!" I half yelled because they can hear us inside the office.

"I'm just taking what's mine!"

"What yours? That's not yours!" I hissed.

"Oh yeah? Well my family can prove to you that I'd been wearing this bracelet since I was 7." he replied. I searched his eyes if he was just joking but I saw nothing. Pure sincerity is all I could see. Maybe the bracelet was not really mine; he couldn't be the kid who saved my life before, right?

We were interrupted by Mrs. Anderson asking us to enter.

"Sydney, I told your dad that I would remove your detention and suspension to the Winter Dance on Saturday if you'll apologize to Blake right now." Mrs. Anderson said happily, as if that could change anything.

I didn't move nor said anything. My dad nudges me to apologize but I didn't move, I just glared at the floor.

"Syd, come on. Just say you're sorry and everything will be back to normal again. You don't have to attend detention-" I cut my dad off.

"Back to normal again? What about my scholarship? Are they going to give it back again if I apologized?"

he shook his head and I prodded on, "I'd rather spent my afternoons in detention and lock myself up at our house and not be able to attend the dance than apologize to this jerk! It's all his fault dad, Mrs. Anderson please." I yelled and I could feel tears welling up of anger.

"I'm sorry Sydney but that's all I could do for you. I can't give your scholarship back because rules are rules. Just apologize so that you can spend your afternoons with your other friends." Mrs. Anderson encouraged with a smile. I still didn't move, just my tears continually flowing down my cheeks.

"Come on, Syd. Do this for me, for your mom. She would not like to see you like this." my dad said as he put an arm around my shoulder for comfort. I just nodded and wiped my tears away with my hand and turned to the standing-still Blake.

"I'm so sorry Blake Collins for punching you like that. I didn't mean to do it. I'm so sorry." I said grudgingly with my head down and glaring at the floor furiously. My fist is clenched tightly ready to give him another blow.

"That's good Sydney. Now, I'm going to take back your detention and you'll be able to attend the winter dance. That'sall that I'd like to say. Thank you Mr. Parker for coming over and I'm sorry about the scholarship." Mrs. Anderson said dismissing us.

My dad and I left the school with me still furious about what happened. I can't believe I just apologized to him!

After dinner, I went straight to my room and drifted off to sleep.

I woke up earlier than usual because I remembered something. I wasn't able to completely fix my project! I left the lab yesterday after I saw the bracelet and decided to come and get my project before going home to finish it. I totally forgot about that because of my anger with Blake. Today is Thursday, the deadline of my science project.

I prepared myself to go to school quickly and my dad drove me to school right away. The moment I

reached our school, I went straight to the lab to continue my project.

As I open the lab door, I saw Mr. Hopkins collecting the projects.

"Mr. Hopkins, wait!" I said panting after I ran.

"Oh, good morning Sydney." he said casually.

"My project... I-"

"Oh, you're project is really great Sydney! I liked your concept on how you put the slime and be able to create-" he paused and looked at me confused.

"Excuse me, but I think I still haven't fix my project yet." I said raising my materials in hand.

"Oh come on. Stop kidding around. Your project's completely fine and working. I actually tried it awhile ago. You can check it if you like. I'll just bring these other projects in my office." he said and left after I nodded.

Still confused, I went to my project to see it completely fine and looks like how it used to be, how

it should be before yesterday's fiasco. How did this happen? And then I saw a paper under it and read:

"Just like you, I also spent the rest of the night fixing that. We're just equal now. You may be wondering about how I managed to fix it up in one night, well, I'm genius, you can't help it... -Your Equal Partner"

I can't believe this. Blake fixed my project in one whole night... My thoughts were interrupted when Mr. Hopkins returned.

"Sydney, Mrs. Anderson wants to talk to you." he said as he entered to get the other projects.

I just nodded and went to the principal's office.

"Good morning Sydney." She greeted me with her warm smile.

"Good morning ma'am." I greeted back.

"Let's get to the point alright?" she said as she motioned for me to sit on the chair across her desk. "Okay, I have good news for you!" she said excitedly.

I just smiled and she continued, "Blake told me everything when you and your father left yesterday.

He told every single detail on how you tripped over his project accidentally and how he dissembled your project. At first I didn't get what he meant then he asked me not to take your scholarship away. He said it was all his fault and what you did was just your feeling of outburst and he didn't blame you for that. He said he was willing to take the consequences instead of you. I was stunned by his bravery and decided that I should give both of you a chance. With that, I'm not going to give him a detention and I will give your scholarship back." she said happily.

Now, I can't believe what I'm hearing. Did Blake really did all of these things? First, he fixed my project and now he asked to take the consequences and give my scholarship back?

The bell already rang and I thanked Mrs. Anderson for her understanding and went off to my first class, English. Blake is my classmate in this subject and he's already seated on his usual seat far away from mine. As I entered the classroom, I was grinning like crazy when Blake's eyes caught mine. He looks relieved

when he saw me grinning and we looked away at the same time.

I'm now wondering on whether I should thank him or not? After all, it's his fault so he should be the one responsible for it and I still should give him the cold shoulder. Or am I supposed to thank him for explaining everything to Mrs. Anderson and for showing his bravery and fixing my project? What am I supposed to do?

Chapter 3

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 3

"Alright, pass your essays now. Those who aren't done yet, you may pass it before your lunch break ends. That's all for today, goodbye class." Ms. Scott, our English teacher, said as the bell rang.

I still haven't decided yet on whether I'll thank Blake or not. My mind became preoccupied the whole English period thinking on my essay which is still not yet done. I'll just continue doing it later at lunch and pass it later.

I went to the door to see my boyfriend of 5 days, Justin, waiting for me outside the classroom. Justin is the hottest guy in school and I don't know why he

chose me to be his girlfriend. Things just happened last Saturday when Jean invited me to attend a party of one of her cousins. Justin happened to be friends with Jean's cousin and I don't know why but Justin kept me company the whole time and I don't have much of a choice but to talk to him. At the end of the party, he asked me to be his girlfriend. I'll admit it, even though he's the hottest guy around, I don't feel anything for him but as a friend and I told him that. He said let's just give it a try and I agreed and here we are now. Within those five days, I still feel nothing for him, just a friend but that may still change because he's really showing some signs that he cares for me.

"Hey babe." Justin greeted and enveloped me in a hug.

"Hey." I said and he pulled back to kiss me but...

"Ahem." Someone coughed behind me.

Oh thank God. I'm still not ready to be kissed by Justin. I don't know why but I just don't want him to be my first kiss. I want my kiss to be somehow special, not in a school corridor. I turned to look at

the distracter and I felt my stomach drop. Blake was glaring at me and Justin. The glare he gave me somehow brought back memories on how we started to despise each other and became equal partners.

2 years ago...

"Welcome home Syd." My dad said as we stared at our old house here in San Francisco. We're now back here from Florida because I have to study my high school in Van Allen Academy. My dad also got a good job offer here as a sales employee and he happily accepted it.

"Let's get inside." my dad said and went inside with our bags as I was still gaping at our old house. Time flies so fast and I can't believe that 8 years has passed since we left this house and went to my grandparents' in Florida.

I was still reminiscing as I stand in front of our house when...

"HEY!" someone shouted from my right side and I turned to look when something really hard hit my face and I fell on back. SMACK!

I heard someone running towards me and said, "Oh no, God no, no." A gorgeous boy of somewhere around my age said and he leaned down with his hand stretched-out. I was about to grab his hand when he pulled back and grabbed his soccer ball beside me and said, "Oh man! My new ball got dirty."

I looked at him confused and he looked at me like he noticed just now that I was there and gave me the what-the-hell-are-you-doing-there look and held a hand out for me but I refused and got up by myself. How could he care more about his soccer ball get dirty than helping the person he hit so hard on the face and fell?!? I brushed off the dust on my clothes and I glared at him. He looked at me seriously at first and then erupted laughing. He was laughing so hard that he had to clutch his stomach.

I was really furious at him now because after what he did to me, he just started laughing hysterically after looking at me. I shouted at him, "Why are you laughing? There is nothing funny!"

He laughed harder and said, "Yes there is!" He pointed to my face while laughing.

I touched my face to feel something wet. I looked at my hand to see blood! Blood is flowing out of my nose after the ball hit my nose so hard. The person who caused all of this is laughing at me without even saying sorry. He was laughing like my bleeding nose is the funniest thing to be seen on earth.

"STOP LAUGHING! IT'S NOT FUNNY!" I shouted at the laughing boy in front of me.

"Yes it is funny! Look at the mirror!" he said between laughs.

I can't take this anymore. He was laughing instead of being sorry. I can't let this boy escape his consequence for doing this to me. While the boy is still laughing, I punched his face- specifically his nose- very hard like the impact of the ball. He stopped laughing and stumbled back. He touched his nose and saw blood. Haha! That's better.

"Now, we're the same. We're just equal now." I said and smirked at him. He just glared at me and I returned the glare and headed inside our house.

1 week after that...

"So Syd, how did you find your first day here in Van Allen Academy?" Jean, my new friend asked me. Jean and Jack were my first friends here in school and they accepted me even though they knew that they can't have their 'sweet-time' together if I'm here. They treat me very well and I'm very glad to be friends with them.

"This school's great so far. The teachers seem nice and the students as well." I said as we head towards a table carrying our lunch trays. As we were walking, some of my coins fell and I turned to look where it landed so that I could get it after I settled my tray. As I turned, I bumped onto someone and my iced tea spilled on his uniform.

"I'm so sorry..." I said to that person and looked up to see the boy who hit my face last week, "Not." I smirked and glared at him.

"Don't be. We're just equal." he said and pointed to my soaked uniform and to his coke. He smirked and glared and walked away with his friends saying, "Blake, man! Why did you do that to her?" and he just laughed and that's when it all started.

Back to the present...

"Ahem. Will you please move because you're blocking the students' way." Blake said snapping me out my thoughts. I looked up at Justin to see him glaring at Blake as Blake was glaring at Justin. I know from the start that the two of them really don't get along that's why before things heat up, I pulled Justin to the side.

Blake gave me one last look- not a glare anymore- and walked away. As he was walking, her girlfriend and the school's no. 1 dream girl, Stacey, hugged and kissed him. I really don't know what got into Blake that he'll get Stacey as his girlfriend. I'll admit, she's beautiful and sexy but so what? I really don't like that girl.

Lunch time, at the usual table with Jean and Jack...

"You sure you don't want to eat?" Jean said as she and Jack eat their lunch while watching me finish my English essay.

"Yeah. I've got to finish this before the lunch ends." I replied.

"You really are a crammer." Jack laughed as I was writing furiously.

"Alright! Done!" I said happily. "I got to go guys. I have to pass this to Ms. Scott. See ya later!" I said and they waved as I ran the hallway- yes, I ran because I only have five minutes before lunch ends- towards the English faculty room.

I ran as fast as I could and people started to stare at me but I don't care. I could care less about my surroundings especially right now when I'm meeting a dead line. And because I don't care about my surroundings, I slipped with a banana peel. Yes, a banana peel was on the floor and I really don't have any idea how it got there. I just slipped on it and yelled as I was about to fall on the floor face first. SMACK!

I was wondering, the floor must be cold but why is it warm now?

Chapter 4

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 4

Blake's POV

I'm not in the mood to eat lunch with my friends today. I just want to have time to think to myself so I went to the library but since it's just 5 minutes before the bell rings, I just headed to my next class while drinking my coke in can.

I still can't stop thinking about what I saw Syd and Justin doing after English. I really don't know what got into her and she accepted Justin as her boyfriend. There are a lot of decent guys other than him. Argh! Why am I giving so much thought about her these past few days?! Admit it, you had a crush on her the

first time you saw her... W-what? Ugh! My annoying subconscious strikes again! Tsk, Tsk... That's why you threw the soccer ball to her face just for her to notice you and pretended that you didn't care for her at first... Oh would you just shut up!!

I'm now annoyed with the thoughts fighting in my head as I walked down the hallway and saw Mr. Davis, our Gym class teacher, tying the shoe lace of his new white Garnett rubber shoes, AGAIN. I'd seen him tied his shoe lace five times already in front of everyone just before lunch and now's the sixth, outside the boys' locker room where everyone passing the hallway can see his shoes. He's really flaunting his new shoes to everyone to get attention and appraisal from other people. His shoes are so white that I'm tempted to step on it... That's a nice idea... Hmm...

"Hey there Blake!" Mr. Davis greeted me even though I'm still ten steps away.

"Hi Mr. Davis," Might as well complement his effort for flaunting it. "Nice shoes by the way." He grinned

like an idiot that his shoes was complemented as I walked towards him.

"Thanks. I bought it yesterday and it cost me-" he was cut by a scream behind me and I turned around to see what's happening and then... BAM!

I fell on the floor with my back. What was that? Something soft yet heavy landed on top of me...

Sydney's POV

I opened my eyes to see that I landed on top of someone.

"I'm sorry! I'm really sorry! I didn't mean to-" I stopped when I saw who I landed on. Blake was staring up to my eyes. I didn't realize that our faces are so close until I felt his warm breath on my face. My heart started racing and I don't know why. We just stared at each other for a moment until...

"BLAKE COLLINS AND SYDNEY PARKER!" Mr. Davis shouted angrily and I immediately stood up. I looked at Blake as he stood and something caught my eye and I started laughing. Mr. Davis' new sparklingly white shoes were spilled with Blake's coke in can.

Blake laughed too and the other students around us laughed as well.

All of us laughed so hard that we didn't realized that Mr. Davis was red with anger and embarrassment. "I'll give detention to those who will not stop laughing!"

Silence. Mr. Davis was looking around with a furious expression and I find it very funny. Blake started laughing so hard that he has to hold on to the wall for support. I was trying so hard to control my laughter but I can't. I think I have laughter issues because I laugh easily when I hear others laughing so hard. And then it happened, I joined Blake laughing so hard. This moment was so ridiculous because only the two of us were laughing loudly that the people around us were staring at us like we're crazy but we don't care.

"BLAKE COLLINS AND SYDNEY PARKER! SEE YOU IN DETENTION AT EXACTLY 4 PM AT JEFFERSON ROOM!" Mr. Davis shouted at us and I stopped laughing right away while Blake was slowly

recovering. He glared at the both of us then the bell rang.

Oh crap! I still haven't passed my essay. I just nodded and ran towards the English faculty room. I don't have time to frown at my accidental detention when I'm running a late essay. Ms. Scott was standing by the door with other students surrounding her. I managed to give my essay to her and walked towards my next class.

Now I have the time to frown over my detention. Why is this happening to me? I still haven't decided on what will I do with Blake and now I'm going into detention with him by just laughing at a laughable scenario. And plus the fact that I fell on top of him with our faces barely touching. I'm now feeling nervous about later, not because of my detention but because of Blake being there.

3:55 pm, almost time for detention...

I hate this! I'm running late towards my detention at Jefferson Room because Mr. James, my Trigonometry

and last period teacher, dismissed us late. And here I am running towards the shortcut to Jefferson Room along the school yard.

Five minutes, I can make it. I was running so fast and along with my luck, I tripped on a stone and fell in the bushes. Why is this happening to me? As I sat up, I heard a voice...

"Here we are, in the best years of our lives.

With no way of knowing, when the

Wheel stop spinning cause we don't

Know where we're going...

And here we are, on the best day of our lives.

And it's a go, lets make it last, so cheers you

All to that, 'cause this moment's never comin' back"

Wow, nice song, nice voice... I looked up and saw that the sound was coming from an open window of one of the class rooms. The voice is so melodious, so smooth, so... Stop admiring! I shook my head and started running inside the building and up the stairs.

As I walk along the corridors looking for Jefferson Room, I heard the voice much clearer now...

"I used to know her brother, but I never

Knew I loved her, 'till the day she laid her

Eyes on me. Now I'm jumpin' up and down,

She's the only one around, and she means

Every little thing to me"

I know I'm getting closer until I stopped on a door ajar and peeked inside. I saw a boy, but I can't see his face, singing with his guitar while staring out the open windows sitting on one of the tables...

"I've got your picture in my wallet, and your

Phone number to call it, and I miss you more,

Whenever I think about you,. I've got

Your mixed tape in my Walkman, been so

Long since we've been talkin' and in a few

More days, we'll both hook up, forever and ever"

The boy who was singing stopped and looked at me when the door was pushed open and I stumbled in with my pathetic balance.

"There you are Sydney!" Mr. Davis greeted me with a smug expression. "Get in!" he said and opened the door widely for me to enter. "I'll be back at 5:30. Don't do any irrational things, you're in school." He said with a teasing tone and locked the door.

I just stood there for a moment and turned to look at Blake who was looking at me expressionless. He didn't move and the silence is so awkward and tensed so I tried to break it.

"Nice song..." I commented walking slowly towards one of the chairs on the farthest opposite of his side.

He just nodded as I sat and looked outside again. He continued singing like he was the only one here but I don't care. I was too mesmerized by his voice that I wanted to request another song when he finished the one he was singing before I came here. He didn't play after that anymore and just looked at the setting sun. We neither looked nor talked to each other for more

than an hour and the silence is deafening my ears. I can't take this anymore; I have to do this...

"Thank you..." I said quietly and he turned to look at me shocked. "Thank you for explaining everything to Mrs. Anderson and because of that, she'll not take my scholarship away from me. So, thank you..."

He didn't respond and we just stared into each other's eyes and then...

"Time's up!" Mr. Davis said bursting the door open. "That's good. You didn't do anything irrational. You kids may go now."

Blake stood up first and said, "I'm sorry Mr. Davis for laughing at you like that."

"That's alright kiddo! It was just an accident and I'm glad you did that because if not, I'll not know that my new shoes are water proof. Isn't it amazing?" Mr. Davis replied smugly.

Blake just nodded and looked at me at the corner of his eyes and left. It was my turn to stand up and I said as I walked to Mr. Davis, "I'm really sorry sir for laughing at you awhile ago."

"Hahaha... Never mind what happened awhile ago. It was just an accident, I understand. And don't worry, this will not be put in your records." he assured me. I smiled at what he said though I didn't think that this might be put into my records. My mind was too preoccupied on how I will act with Blake after what happened yesterday and today. Whew, good thing Mr. Davis' shoes were water proof...

Chapter 5

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 5

"Syd, what would you like to be the color of your dress?" Jean asked me while we're walking towards our lockers as the final bell for the day rang. We are going to have our dress shopping later for the winter dance tomorrow night. We became so busy with the past week so we didn't have the chance to find our dresses together.

"Hmm.. I don't know. Whatever caught my eye will do." I smiled.

"Will Justin go with us? Because I was hoping that we'll have this time with just the two of us..." she said.

"No, Justin's not going with us. He said he has soccer practice later." I replied.

"I thought they don't have a practice during Fridays?"

"Yeah, but he said they're next game will be against a great team, so they're coach was giving them extra practice." I shrugged.

"Woohoo! Shopping time!" she said as she dragged towards her car at the parking lot.

Blake's POV

Wow, I didn't realize I have fallen asleep under the tree. I must be really tired today, Oh well, might as well leave now, the sun already set.

As I walked towards my locker I heard 2 familiar voices.

"Hi babe! How's your soccer practice?" a girl said.

"Pretty good. Miss me?" a boy said.

"Why wouldn't I?" These voices are indeed from someone I know but I can't figure out whose, so I hid behind the lockers and peeked at them. They are now

making out in front of my locker and when they pulled apart I was too shocked at what I saw.

"Not here baby, people might see us here." Justin said.

"Aww, don't be like that. I missed doing this to you. I really don't know what got into your mind that you replaced Sydney with me." Stacey said and pouted.

"I didn't replace Sydney for you. She's not as hot as you. I just asked her to be my girlfriend at the party last Sunday because my friends dared me to and if I did it right, they're going to pay me 30 bucks!" he said smugly.

"And now that you have your 30 bucks already, when are you planning on ditching her?" she asked.

"Tomorrow night at the dance. What about you, why did you replace me for that jerk Blake?"

"I just want to try a different kind of experience with a different kind of guy, but you know that I'm yours so no worries about that. Blake and I both know that our relationship's not serious. We're just playing along." Stacey answered.

"Then what kind of experience did you get from him?" Justin asked skeptically.

"None. He's not a good kisser like you." She said and started kissing Justin again.

"So when are you going to ditch him?" he asked as they pulled apart.

"Same as you. Tomorrow night at the dance. Oh, I still haven't found the perfect dress for me, will you mind if you go with me at the mall now?"

"No, not at all." Justin replied. I can't hold myself anymore so punched one of the lockers and walked away.

I can't believe what I heard! How could they do this to us!? I know that my relationship with Stacey was not serious and I don't really care about her that much. But how could they do this to Syd?! She's so innocent and she doesn't know anything about what's going on here. Justin's just playing with her in exchange for30 bucks! I've got to tell and warn her. She shouldn't come to the dance tomorrow because Justin's just going to ditch her.

I got my cell phone to call but I realized that I don't know her number so I tried to call her friends.

Sydney's POV

"Whew! The dresses that we got are really great." I said as we got out of the store after 4 hours of roaming around the mall finding the perfect dress.

"Yeah, they're really awesome! Wait, I'll just go to the restroom first. Wanna come?" Jean asked. I shook my head told her to go and I'll just wait for her.

Jean kept on changing and changing her mind in choosing her dress. She found a sequined pink strapless dress for her. She helped me choose mine as well. There are a lot of dresses to choose from but I just settled with a with a simple white spaghetti-strapped, knee-high dress. I think this'll suit me well for tomorrow night.

As I waited, a sweet couple walking hand-in-hand caught my eye. I looked at them and followed the couple. I don't know who they are because their backs are turned to me but they seem very familiar.

Suddenly, the boy's wallet fell behind. They stopped walking and he turned around to pick it up and then I saw them. Justin, my boyfriend, and Stacey, Blake's girlfriend, are walking hand-in-hand and so sweet together. Justin saw me and looked shocked.

"S-Syd, it's not what you think it is-" Justin stuttered and I cut him off.

"Oh yeah? Then what do you think it is? I'm not stupid Justin!!" I retorted.

"No, I'm just-" I cut him right away. I'm so angry now and I can feel my blood going to my face and tears forming in my eyes.

"You're just cheating on me! Is that what you wanna say? Cheating on me and Blake!! You both are so sick!!" I know that I don't have much feelings for Justin that's why I shouldn't act like this but the feeling of being cheated, betrayed and fooled is so strong and hurts so bad. I walked away and I heard Jean calling after me but I was so angry and just went straight out of the mall.

I went to my hang-out place whenever I want to be with myself, the playground. Childish as it seems but I really get some peace of mind whenever I'm here. I sat on the swing and put my shopping bag aside as tears came pouring out.

Blake's POV

Damn it! I was too late! I called Jack to get Syd's number but she won't answer. Jack gave me Jean's and I called her. She said that Syd already saw Justin and Stacey at the mall and now she's missing.

I went to their house but no one's in there. I looked around the neighborhood until I saw her by the playground, sitting on a swing, looking down and crying. I walked closer but she didn't seem to notice my presence.

Sydney's POV

Why is this happening to me? Why? I tried my best to be a good girlfriend to him but why did he do this to me?

I was crying so hard and so deep in thought that I didn't notice that someone approached me. The

person suddenly held out a handkerchief in front of me and I looked up with my tear-stained face to see Blake. I was too shocked to see him here.

"Here. You can use this." he said kindly. I was still in shock and I accepted his handkerchief. He just smiled and sat on the other swing on my right. We didn't say anything; just my staggered breathing can be heard.

When I gained my composure and my breathing became normal, Blake broke the silence.

"Are you alright now?" Blake asked, concern evident in his voice.

"I guess so..." I said turned to look at him. He has the right to know that he was also cheated by his girlfriend. "Blake, I-I saw Stacey with Justin at the mall awhile ago..."

"Yeah, I know." he said.

"You know? How?" I asked.

"I was actually looking for you awhile ago and I called Jean and she told me what happened."

"You were looking for me? Why?" I asked, curious.

"I discovered awhile ago in school that Justin and Stacey are cheating on us and that they're planning on ditching the both of us tomorrow at the dance..." he answered truthfully.

"What? How dare they do this to the both of us! Why did Justin do this to me?" I shouted.

"I don't want to say this but you have to know the truth why Justin asked you to be his girlfriend last Sunday..." Blake said quietly.

"Why?" I asked as my voice broke. I know that I won't like the things he'll tell from the tone of his voice.

"Justin's friends dared him to make you his girlfriend and if he succeeded, they'll pay him 30 bucks..." he looked at me with sympathy in his eyes, "I'm sorry if you have to hear this from me but you have the right to know..."

I didn't say anything as new set of tears poured out. We became silent again and then I was the one who broke it this time.

"Blake, can I ask you something?" I asked. My tone was wary because this question might offend him.

"Yeah. What is it?"

"Why did you ask Stacey to be your girlfriend? Please don't get offended by this but you are so opposite. I mean-" he cut me off.

"Because she's prep and I'm emo. Is that what you mean?" he asked angrily.

"NO! I don't care about those stereotypes and labels. I don't give a damn about that! I don't judge people based on what other people label them. As a matter of fact, I really don't get the point of labeling other people as emo, prep, jock or whatever! For me, it doesn't matter in this world. What really matters is that you yourself know who you are and that you're a good person who does good deeds and doesn't care and won't be affected about other people's opinion about you. Be confident about yourself and just be you." Wow, that was the longest speech I said with Blake.

Blake was too surprised by my sudden outburst and his eyes were wide with shock. He shook his head and said, "I guess you're right. I'm sorry if I became

angry awhile ago. I just don't like other people judging me, you know..."

"No worries. I understand." I smiled.

He was looking at me and said, "Well, uhmm... I asked Stacey to be my girlfriend because I want to show to other people that even though I'm emo, I could still get a prep as my girlfriend. I want to show them that labels aren't really important when it comes to relationships. And then Stacey suddenly flirted with me one time so I just asked her and the rest is history..."

"Did you love her?" I asked.

"Not really because I know we're both not serious about our relationship and I love someone else..."

"You love someone else?" I was shocked by this news.

"Yes, but she left and now, I'm still waiting for her..." he said wistfully.

"She left you? Why?"

"She actually didn't leave me because I doubt that she even knows my name neither do I know hers. I was just 7 yrs. old then when they left..."

"10 yrs. ago... Hmm... Childhood love..."

"Yeah, but I'm still waiting for her," he shook his head, "Let's stop talking that. What about you? Why did you accept Justin as you boyfriend?"

"Well, I just want to know the feeling of having a boyfriend. Everyday I see Jean and Jack so deeply in love with each other and I can see how happy they are. I want to feel that kind of happiness, well I'm not saying that I'm not happy. I know that the happiness of Jean whenever she's with Jack is a different kind of happiness whenever she's with me or other people. I just want to love and to be loved. I thought I can feel that with Justin but I was wrong."

"Did you love Justin?" Blake asked.

"Well, I was trying but I didn't succeed." I answered. "I hate him now more than anything else. He betrayed, cheated and fooled me. He probably would

tell this to everyone tomorrow. Ugh, the nerve of him!"

Blake didn't replied but he eyed my shopping bag conspiratorially. "Is that you dress for tomorrow night?"

"Supposedly, I bought it awhile ago though I doubt that I would have a chance to wear it anytime soon."

"Why so?"

"I only wear a dress during occasions." I answered.

"You think the winter dance isn't an occasion?"

"It is an occasion, but why would I need a dress if I'm not going anymore?"

"You're not going anymore? Why?"

"Oh come on... I thought of all people, you'd be the one to understand that I'll not be able to attend the dance tomorrow. Justin was my boyfriend so he's basically my date but now everything between us is over. And that makes me dateless." I explained.

"No, you're not dateless." he said with a playful smile.

"I'm not?" I asked skeptical.

"Yeah. You still have a date."

"Who?"

"Me."

Chapter 6

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 6

"We can't let them win. They can't succeed with their plan on ditching the both of us. We can't let them laugh at us for just staying and crying on a dark corner. We have to show them we're not affected, we have to fight back and do something..."

Knock. Knock. Knock.

"Syd, you have to wake up now or you'll be late for the dance. Jean called and I said you fell asleep. Blake also dropped by and I said he just go ahead and that I'll just drive you to school." dad said through the door of my room.

6:01 pm, my bedside clock read. Oh shoot! I fell asleep on my bed after cleaning the whole house this afternoon and now I only have 59 minutes left to prepare for the Winter Dance which will begin at 7:00 pm at the school auditorium.

I scrambled out of my bed and went to the bathroom to have a quick shower. While showering, the words in my dream kept on repeating in my head. I know those words were not just a dream because those are the words Blake told me last night to convince me to fight back and go to the dance with him tonight. Based on his actions, I know he has a plan but he won't tell me and that I'll just know it later.

After showering, I put on the dress that Jean and I bought yesterday. I blow dried my hair and brushed it and decided to just let it fall topped with a white headband. I looked at the clock and read 6:47 pm. It's a 15-minute drive from here to school, so we better get going. Oh forget about the make-up! I'll just apply it later so I shove the necessary make-up inside my bag. I put on my silver high-heeled shoes and looked at the mirror and went downstairs.

"Let's go dad! We're gonna be late!" I said as I walked towards the door.

"Wow, you look beautiful Syd! Wait, aren't you going to put on make-up?" he asked as we now headed towards the car.

"I'll put it later and on the way." I said buckling myself quickly.

"Okay..." he said and zoomed off to school.

I tried to put on the make-up carefully while the car moves slowly and smoothly and when it stops at stoplights. I somehow managed to put it on my face properly without smudging it but I still need to have some finishing touches. I'll probably just go straight to the restroom.

We made it to school right away because there are no traffic jams on our way which is a very good thing. We arrived at 6:58 pm. I bid good bye to my dad and said that Blake will drive me home so he doesn't have to worry. My dad's close to Blake and his family that's why he was ecstatic when I said that I'd be going with Blake tonight. He kept on bugging me to be nice

to Blake and be friends with him but I know it is very impossible until last night.

I walked towards the gate as I passed the parking lot full of lights and caught a glimpse of my reflection on the dark tinted window of a shiny black Mercedes. The car looks so expensive and outstanding. Its windows are tinted so dark that I could use it as a mirror. I looked around to see no one and decided that I'll just continue the finishing touches of my make-up here.

Blake's POV

Syd's dad, Steven, said that Syd fell asleep after cleaning their house so I'll just go ahead and he'll just drive her here. So here I am now, sitting inside my car at the parking lot listening to music and waiting for Syd to show up. I can't get in there without her or else the plan will not be as successful. Well, it's actually not a plan. I just wanted to show to Justin and Stacey that we're not affected by what they did to us and that we could still come and enjoy this party like they do.

While my mind was wandering off and staring into the space outside, a girl wearing a white dress passed my car and stopped. She went back to look at my car and then I realized she was the girl I was waiting for, Sydney.

Wow, she looks beautiful in that white dress letting her long hair fall back. She looked around the parking lot, leaned closer to my window and stared at me. She dug something out from her bag. Eyeliner? She applied it on carefully while looking at me? Wait. She can't see me here, my windows are tinted black so there's now way that she's looking at me. And then it hit me. She's using my windows as a mirror. Might as well allow her use it, it's not that she's going to destroy it or something.

She's done with the eyeliner and she got out a... lip gloss. As she leaned closer and her lips are slightly apart, my heart began to beat faster. I looked closely as she applied lip gloss on and I felt some kind of electric current rushed through me and pushing me forward to touch it. I reached out slowly my fingers brushed against the cold glass of my window and

snapped out of my thoughts. Oh man! What was that?! I shouldn't be feeling this! I shook my head to clear my mind as she finished putting on the lip gloss.

She looked at herself overall and pleased with her work, she gave a one breath taking smile. I felt my jaw literally drop and shut it quickly and shook my head. As she leaned back and straightened herself, I decided that it's time to show up. I opened the window and she gasped in shock revealing me inside the car.

Sydney's POV

Alright, done! I straightened up and took a one last look and then the window suddenly opened down. I gasped in shock seeing Blake smirking inside and looking at me up and down.

"You finished fixing yourself?" he asked still smirking seeing my shocked expression.

"H-how long have you been there?" I asked not knowing what to say.

"Mmm... 45 minutes max."

"What are you doing there?"

"Well, I was actually waiting for you to come. I couldn't get in there without my date. And then you appeared out of nowhere and started using my window as a mirror and applied make-up on. And then I found myself enjoying watching what you were doing so I didn't interrupt." he said and then winked at me.

I didn't know what to say so I just glared at him. He just laughed and got out of the car. I felt my eyes pop out as I saw how hot and gorgeous Blake was in his black collared button-up shirt that fit his body with a silver tie.

"So, shall we get in?" he asked and held his hand out for me.

"Yeah. Let's get this over with." I replied taking his hand and he just laughed as we entered the school auditorium together hand-in-hand.

Wow, I was astonished by how they made this place fit the theme for this year's Winter Dance, Winter

Wonderland, and they really made it one. The whole place was twinkling with snow flake-like lights, ice crystals all-over the place, and of course loud music booming out of the large speakers with people dancing on the dance floor.

"Hey let's dance!" Blake said excitedly as 'Seventeen Forever' by Metro Station started playing. Before I could reply, which is a big NO; he already towed me toward the center of the dance floor while a fast song was playing. I can't escape with these people moving with the beat, so might as well dance and have fun. Blake and I danced and I have to admit, I was actually enjoying and having fun.

We danced with all of the fast and upbeat songs for what felt like hours and I told him that I'm already tired and thirsty and he lead me out of the dance floor and towards the snack tables.

"Wow, that was really fun!" I said.

"Yeah. But it'll be much more fun if I don't have to endure the pain I'm getting from your heels." he said smirking.

I just smacked him on his arm and he just laughed it off.

We reached the snack tables and us both grabbed fruit punches. We finished it off in one gulp and took another glass.

As I was finishing the second glass, I felt him stiffen on my side and wrapped his left arm around my shoulders and said, "Hey Justin, Stacey. How are you doin'?"

Chapter 7

It's Not hard to Pretend to Love You: 7

"What are you guys doing here? And Blake, why are you with her?" Stacey asked shocked as Justin.

"We're having fun like you guys here... Besides, I heard what happened last night and since, we're both single and dateless for this dance, well, why not give it a try..." Blake shrugged and continued as his tone turned a bit harsh, "Why, aren't we allowed to come here?"

"No, we're just surprised that after what happened last night... Syd..." Justin answered as he met my gaze. I think I'm gonna faint with this confrontation. I tried

to turn away but Blake's hand slid down to mine and squeezed it a bit.

"Oh, forget about that. We both already moved on. We just thought of it as some kind of a bad dream, nonetheless. Besides, we actually are grateful that you already broke up with us or else we would not realize the wonderful truth..." Blake trailed of as he grinned and looked down at me. I just stared back at him shocked. I gave him the what-the-hell-are-you-talking-about? look.

"What do you mean? I don't get it." Justin said confused. I was also confused at what's going on here so grabbed a drink nearest to the table beside me as Blake just held my other hand. Blake was still smiling a mischievous smile.

"Blake, what are you talking about? I know you're somehow mad at me that's why you're doing this. You probably like me, but I'm sorry, I don't like you back." Stacey said.

"Stacey, what are you talking about?" Blake said with a short chuckle, "For all I know, I don't like you too!" Stacey's eyes went wide, it was so hilarious that I

would burst into laughter but I can't. Not with these things making my mind ache with confusion. "Because I love you...--" Blake continued as he wrapped his arms around my waist making me face him, "Sydney." And then he pressed his warm lips to mine. My body went numb and still and my eyes wide open in shock as he kissed me oh-so passionately in front of the mouth-hanging-open Justin and Stacey.

After a few moments, he pulled away and looked straight into my eyes and smiled a breathtaking smile and turned to face Justin and Stacey who are still gaping at us and said, "The wonderful truth I was talking about is that I already found the girl of my dreams. I'd like you to meet my very awesome new girlfriend, Syd."

None of them spoke and Blake smirked and faced me and said, "Let's dance, love." I was still in shock with the things happening, so he just pulled me to the dance floor as a new slow began. He placed my hands around his neck as he put his hands on my

waist. He was still smiling hugely and I tried to clear my head before it knock me off.

I blinked a lot of times until I can finally talk.

"What the hell was that Mr. Blake Collins?!" I hissed gritting my teeth.

"Well Ms. Sydney Parker, that's what you call payback." he replied.

"What?! I don't understand! I couldn't grasp anything sane with what you said awhile ago!"

"Oh come on, I thought you were the smartest student in our batch yet you don't even understand the basic fundamentals of theatre arts." he said as he chuckled softly.

"Theatre arts? You mean everything that you did awhile was just an act?" I asked as things started to sink in.

"Yes! Why, did you really want it to be true?" he asked teasingly.

"Cut it out Blake! I was just surprised with your acting awhile ago. You started telling something that I don't have any idea at what you're talking about."

"Hahaha! I could've won an Oscar with that performance. Have you seen their faces? It was so hilarious! I would've fallen on the floor laughing so hard. And your eyes, hahaha, it's as big as my father's golf balls!" he continued laughing.

"Don't talk about my eyes! You could've mentioned to me about your plan so that I wouldn't be standing there like an idiot like them!"

"Hahaha! Well, I thought about that but I also wanted to see your reaction."

"But you should've mentioned it to me so that we could edit some things!" I retorted.

"Edit some things? Hmm... And what would that be that you wanted to edit even though everything went well?" he asked skeptically as he slowly composed himself.

"Don't you know that because of that, you already stole my first-... Never mind."

"Kiss?" he whispered seductively as his piercing brown eyes met mine. I could feel the heat rising on my cheeks.

I was speechless. We just stayed like that, staring into each other's eyes as someone bumped on my back that pushed me closer to Blake.

"Sorry." I murmured.

"S'okay." He smiled as I tried to pull away but to be bumped by someone again. Blake laughed a small laugh and said, "Don't worry its fine with me." And he just held me close and swayed with the music.

—

He parked his car in front of our house. We idled for a moment inside his car.

"Well, uhh... Thanks for the ride. I really had fun." I finally said.

"No problem. I had fun too." he smiled.

"So how are things going to go, now that Justin and Stacey thought we're 'together'?" I asked. That question kept on bugging my mind since awhile ago.

"Yeah. I also thought about that and I have a plan." he stated smugly.

"A plan? Ok, so you better mention it to me now or I'm gonna beat you up!" I threatened. I want to know this plan now so that I wouldn't be surprised with the things coming.

"Hahaha! Syd, you really are a war freak!" he commented as he laughed.

"I am not a war freak!" I defended.

"Hahaha... Ok, ok... Here's the thing," he paused dramatically as he faced me and looked at me intently, "Be my girlfriend."

I looked at him shocked like I saw a ghost walked by me. What is he talking about? Is he out of his mind? Is he already insane? Things happened so fast that I couldn't grasp anything! It was like 3 days ago, we totally despise each other, and now this! What has happened to our world now?...

Chapter 8

It's Not Hard to Pretend to love You: 8

"Be my girlfriend" Blake said.

I just stared at him and I felt my jaw drop open. I blinked many times and shook my head to put up my thoughts together.

"Are you insane?" I asked.

"No. Ok look, I know that sounds ridiculous and we both know that we don't cope with each other harmoniously that much but we have to do this..." he simply said.

"Stop beating around the bush Blake. What is really your point?"

"I already declared to Justin and Stacey that we're already together. My act awhile ago will be nothing if we they can't see any evidence of it."

"So you want me to hook up with you just to make your story realistic?" I asked sourly.

"Well, you don't have to really hook up with me. But we can pretend to be. Pretend to be my girlfriend. Pretend that we're together. With that, they'll believe we're really together and they'll know that we're something that they shouldn't use and then set aside."

I didn't know what to say. We were silent until my cell phone beeped. I received a message from my dad asking where I am.

I looked at Blake and said, "I have to go." And then I opened the passenger door and as I was about to step out, Blake caught my hand and said, "Think about it." I just nodded and went out.

He drove a few meters away towards their house and stepped out. He looked back towards my direction and went inside.

—

I still can't get my mind off with my last encounter with Blake weeks ago after the dance, even after my dad and I spent the holidays at my grandparents' house in Florida. I had a really great time during the holidays. On Christmas, my other cousins went over and we traded gifts. On New Year's Eve, my relatives and I went by the lake to watch the fireworks exhibition.

As what other people say, 'Every thing has to come to an end.' And now I'm back in San Francisco since today's Sunday and tomorrow's going to be the start of classes of the new semester. I'm on my way to our house in a bus without my dad. My grandpa got high blood pressure from the food we ate the other day and my dad presented to help my grandma take care of him. I would've stayed to help too but my dad said that I shouldn't miss school and he'll call me everyday and will come back after a few days.

So here I am now, thinking to myself as to what I would expect when I get back home and tomorrow at school. I still haven't decided on whether I should

accept Blake's idea to pretend to be is girlfriend or not. We haven't contacted each other since neither of us have each other's numbers. I sighed and looked out the window as I saw Justin and Stacey walked inside a pizza store. I felt that betrayed feeling again and instantly, I made up my mind.

As the bus stopped on the stop near our school, I went out along with my bag. My bag is not that big since I have some clothes left in Florida so I didn't bring much. I went straight to school and it was already 6 pm so there wouldn't be any people there except for the guards and care taker.

I stopped in front of the gate and told the guard, "Hi sir! I was wondering if I could enter because I forgot something inside my locker. I really have to get it as soon as possible. It's very important!"

"Sure, but don't take long." He said and he let me enter.

I sprinted towards the lockers and went for Justin's. 614985. There, his locker opened. Within the short time that I was Justin's girlfriend, I knew a lot of things about him, his locker password for an instance

but he doesn't know that I know. I also know that he keeps tabs of the things happening and is about to happen in a daily planner. Yes, he keeps a daily planner because he once forgot a soccer game and he wasn't able to come and his team blamed him why they lost. Since then, he put everything that he's going to do in his daily planner. He doesn't bring this home, just here in his locker.

With this daily planner in hand, we can get a lot of information of what we're supposed to do.

I went out of the school, daily planner in hand, and went straight to our house. I put my things in place and took a quick shower to freshen up myself. And then I took off to my neighbor, to Blake's house.

I rang the doorbell and Sandy and Sander were the ones who opened the door. Sandy and Sander are the twin brother and Sister of Blake. I really like these kids as they like me too. They treat me as their sister they never had and I treat them as my little brother and sister I never had. I baby sit them, though I just thought of it as sibling bonding, when their parents are not around and when Blake is not around.

"Syd!" Sander cheered happily.

"Mom, Dad! Syd's here!" Sandy called as they pulled my hand to the dining room.

"Hey, how was your holidays Sydney?" Jodie, Blake's mom, said.

"Great! My dad and I went to my grandparents' house in Florida." I answered.

"Is he there? I want to ask him if he watched the basketball game last week..." William, Blake's dad, said.

"He's still back in Florida. He has to take care of my grandpa."

"Oh, you're only one there?" Mrs. Collins asked.

"Yeah."

"Why don't you just stay here for dinner then? I'm making the most requested lasagna." She said in a sing song voice.

"Haha... Sure!"

"Syd, let's play! Let's play!" Sander and Sandy cheered.

"Ok, ok. But what are we going to play?"

"Race to our room!" they both said and with that, they both rushed up stairs and I ran after them.

We ran until we reached the kids' room and I tackled them all on the bed and started tickling them.

Blake's POV

It's been weeks since I last saw Syd. I heard she went to Florida with her dad. I wonder if she's already here and what her response might be.

As I lie on my bed doing nothing and bored as hell, I heard running outside and then laughing. Curious, I went out to check what's happening until I saw Syd tickling the twins inside their room. Seems like they are having so much fun, oh how I wish I could join them. W-what? Did I just think that?

"Blake help!" Sandy said between laughs.

Syd turned to look back at me and said, "Don't you dare."

Might as well help. I took a step toward them and said, "Oh yes I dare." And with that, lounged on the bed and pinned Syd down and the twins and I started tickling her. She struggled to turn around until I was the one pinned and they started tickling me. And I have to admit, I am a very ticklish guy so I laughed so hard. I struggled to gain dominance and I, again, was on top pinning Sydney down until my mom said, "Kids! Dinner's ready! Come down now!"

"Hm... I'm hungry already. Let's go." Sandy said.

"Yeah let's go Sandy, let's give them their time." Sander said with a smirk. And the two left. I stared down at Syd, drowning in her green mesmerizing eyes.

Syd's POV

Blake was still on top of me, pinning me down and straddling me as the twins went down stairs. Our faces are so close, our lips barely touching. I was captivated by his piercing brown eyes as we stared at each other until Sander came in.

"Hey, if you guys are planning to do something, don't do it on my bed please. My covers are newly replaced." Sander said by the door.

We looked at him wide-eyed and shocked.

"What? I may just be a kid, but I know a lot of things. Anyways, mom said let's go down now. Hmm... I'm really hungry." he said as he left.

Blake moved and I sat up straight on the bed.

"Your brother really has a wide range of imagination." I commented.

"He got my genes."

"Haha, I guess you're right."

"Oh yes I am." He said and then silence.

"Blake, we have to talk" I said after a few seconds.

Chapter 9

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 9

The dinner went by smoothly. We all talked about different kinds of things while eating and just had a nice time with each other. The dinner ended as soon as it started. We're now playing some video games in the twins' room. I didn't have the chance to talk to Blake awhile ago because their mom called again for us to go down. I just decided to tell my decision to him when the kids are already asleep.

"Woohoo! I win! You owe me 10 bucks Blake!" Sander said as the letters KO appeared on the screen telling that Blake lost his fight with Sander.

"Rematch." Blake said sternly as their mom appeared by the door.

"No more rematch Blake. Kids, it's already 10:30, you've got to go to sleep now. Tomorrow's the start of the new semester, I don't want you guys to be late." she said.

"Okay, but mom... Can Syd stay here for the night? I don't want to have the nightmares again..." Sandy quietly said beside me.

"That's fine by me honey, but its Syd's decision on whether she'll stay or not." Mrs. Collins looked at me with a concerned look.

"Please Syd?" Sandy pleaded.

"Sure, no problem with me. Besides, I'll just be by myself in our house so that's really fine with me." I said and smiled as she hugged me.

"Thanks, Syd." Mrs. Collins said.

"No problem." I replied with a smile and she left with that. Then Sander lounged on the bed where Sandy

and I were sitting on and then Sandy brought out a book. Little Red Riding Hood.

"Will you read us a story first so that we could sleep soundly?" Sandy asked.

I smiled and grabbed the book and positioned ourselves comfortably while Blake was sitting on the other bed looking at us expressionless.

"One day there was a girl..." and I began to read the book.

Blake's POV

She's going to stay here for the night. When Sander and Sandy are already asleep, we can already talk privately. As she was sitting in between my siblings, their heads on her shoulders while reading them a story, I felt something weird and different. I thought that I wished I was also being told a story by her and my head was on her shoulder as well like them.

When she ended the story, the twins already fell asleep.

"Blake!" she whispered enough for me to hear.

"What?" I replied on the same voice.

"Help me lay them down properly." She said as she slowly lifts their heads from her shoulders.

I carried Sander back to his bed and put the blankets on as she did the same for Sandy. She turned to look at me and motioned for us to go outside. We went downstairs and to the living room where she got some kind of a notebook and sat on the couch. I just went and sat beside her.

"Okay Blake, was your offer 2 weeks ago still on?" she asked after making sure that no one can hear us since all of them are already in their rooms.

"Yes and I've been waiting for your answer. So what is it?"

"Okay, yes. I accept the plan BUT!..." she said.

"But what?"

"You are not allowed to do some things that you aren't supposed to do because all of this is just a pretension. Nothing's true." She stated.

"Of course I know that! I was the one who proposed this plan you know? Nothing will happen between us unless you want us to..." I teased as she glared daggers at me. I just laughed at that.

"Cut it out Blake! Okay look, here." She said as she raised her notebook?

"What's that?"

"It's Justin's daily planner." She answered. Wow, Justin keeps a planner.

"Okay, what about it?"

"He puts every single plan of his life in this and I think this might come in handy. I thought we should go to his and Stacey's major dates, major because he only put the major events here, and so that they'll know that we're really together and see us all the time. We can do some thing that'll make them regret leaving us behind. Do you get what I mean?"

"Yeah, I see your point. You want us to go to their dates and show them how we're really into each other in our dates." I stated.

"Exactly. So what do you think?"

"Yeah, sure. I don't mind. But do you know when and where are they going to have their dates? Is it written there?" I asked pointing to the now I know, the planner.

"Yes, here check this out." She said handing it to me.

January 19- Dinner date with Stacey at The Last Supper Club, 7 pm

February 14- Romeo and Juliet with Stacey at theGolden Gate Theatre, 6:30 pm

March 25- Welcome Party for André Van Eimeren, 7 pm

Wow, I didn't know that Justin's interested with these kinds of stuffs. I mean these events aren't his type of events on having a date. I thought he'll just bring Stacey to some movie crap and make-out with her at the back from the opening till the credits.

"So what do you think? I don't know much of these events because they're some kind of events wherein only people in the high society attend to. I was really

surprised when I read that Justin's going to take Stacey on a date there." Syd said.

"Don't worry, I know these things. I was really surprised too that she'll take Stacey to watch Romeo and Juliet and go to André Van Eimeren's party."

"Huh? Who the heck is André Van Eimeren" she asked confused.

"What? You mean, you didn't know André Van Eimeren?" I asked shocked. Syd, one of the smartest people I've ever known, didn't know the famous painter!

"You don't have to rub it on my face Blake! I told you, these things aren't for me but for people in the high society! How many times do I have to repeat that I'm not rich like you?!" she snapped.

"I'm sorry if you mistook my reaction. I'm sorry okay? Here, I was just shocked that you, the one of the smartest people I know, didn't know about the famous painter, André Van Eimeren. I mean he was just really famous for his art work, 'Sunset by the Boulevard'."

"Wait 'Sunset by the Boulevard'? As in the painting that costs $500,000?" she asked shocked.

"Uh, yeah. Why?"

"Oh my god, that's one of the most amazing works of art I've ever seen in my life. I saw it in a documentary video but it didn't say the painter. I researched for that on the internet to no avail. And wow, I can't believe he's coming here!" she said excitedly.

"Yes, he really is and I think he will bring with him along all of his art works and of course, Sunset by the Boulevard, to show it to the people who admire his art. Don't worry; we'll be going there because that's our original plan whatever happens."

"But of course the tickets are gonna be real expensive. I don't have enough budget for that you know." She said as her smile faded.

"No worries there. My father will be sponsoring this event so we'll be able to get tickets for us." I said smiling as she smiled widely.

"Thank you!" she said as she enveloped me in a hug. Oh, why is my body reacting weirdly against hers? I felt like I was shocked with some static electricity and I think she felt it too because she pulled right away after 5 seconds.

"Sorry." She muttered softly as she pulled away.

I know that the next moments are gonna be real awkward so I tried to make a joke out of it, "So, are you falling for me now? You know, if you want to make this real, just tell me and I'll think about it." I said and smirked.

"Oh shut up Blake! How can you be so sure that I'm falling for you? That thing will never happen neither in your dreams!" she snapped.

I pretended to be hurt by clutching my heart with my right hand and said, "Ouch! How could you say that when you don't know what my dreams are? Maybe you're dreaming of me dreaming of you huh?" And with that she shoved me hard and I fell on the floor laughing as she went to the stairs.

"I will never fall for you Blake. Never." Then she stormed up the stairs and to the twins' room. After she said that, I stopped laughing on the floor. I felt some kind of sadness? I'm not quite sure; I just don't like the feeling. I know I shouldn't be reacting like this because I know that we're just doing this for payback, nothing else. Ugh! I'm confused! Maybe I'm just sleepy that's why I'm thinking these things! Might as well go to sleep because I know that tomorrow's gonna be a great day.

Syd's POV

Why did I say that? No, that's not the correct question. Why do I have this gut feeling that I'm going to eat my words back someday? That I'm going to regret the words that came out of my mouth 5 minutes ago? Ugh! I'm just sleepy that's why I'm thinking like this. I have to have enough energy to start a new semester, year and probably a new life tomorrow.

Chapter 10

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 10

WHAT THE!!??... When I woke up with the sound of a car engine, I saw the clock on the wall and saw that it's already 7:07 am! I'm gonna be late for school!! I stood up right away seeing that I was the only one left inside the twins' room. Aaahh!! I have to hurry!

I ran downstairs to see a shocked Mrs. Collins.

"Syd, what are you still doing here? I thought you're already in school?" Mrs. Collins asked.

"I'm sorry but I over slept. I forgot to activate the alarm in my phone." I replied as I ran down.

"But I asked Blake to wake you up and he said that you already left." She said confused.

"Huh? Blake said that?" I said with venomously.

"Yes. Oh! You better go now before you become late!" she said as she looked at the clock.

"Thank you Mrs. Collins! Bye!" I said as I ran to our house and prepare myself for school very quickly. I ran towards the bus stop as the bus stop strikes 7:18 am. I better not be late or Blake will pay for this.

Blake's POV

Hahaha! She's fuming as she left our house. I was sitting inside my car, parked outside our house, as I wait for Syd to leave and well, just follow her to school. I really didn't want to wake her up because: 1.) I want to see her break her attendance record. 2.) I want to see how she acts when she's in a hurry and in adrenaline. And 3.) She looks so innocent and beautiful as she sleeps. I didn't wanna wake her up because I must admit that I was enjoying watching her sleep. I wish she's always like that so peaceful and innocent and not like a lion ready to lounge on

me anytime. I could still remember how her chest rise as she breathe, how her mouth move a bit as if to whisper something, how her... Argh!! I sound like a retarded stalker! I should stop thinking about these kinds of things! I should focus myself on our plan.

Syd's POV

I dashed straight to my locker to get my things and to Justin's locker to return his planner as I have already copied the important dates. I should return it right away so that he'll not be skeptical as to why his planner was gone.

I'm now running towards my first class, English. 5 minutes before the bell... I can make it in time, I'm not gonna break my attendance record... Just a few steps...

Rrriinnggg!!!!!!!!!!

Whew!! The bell rang as I took my first step inside the classroom. Everyone was settled down as Ms. Scott went to the front.

"Good morning Sydney! You're just in the nick in of time." Ms. Scott greeted me.

"Yeah, just in the very nick of time." I said in between pants from my running. As I straightened up myself to go to my chair, the guys started whistling like wolves and howling.

"Woah baby! My eyes are burning!!" one of my male classmates said.

"Syd, you're sooo hot!!" another one said as he howled.

"The lacy red suits you well!!" one of the most perverted guys in school cheered.

I really don't get what they are talking about. Why are they acting like this? Have they done drugs last Christmas?

I'm really confused as to what was happening in here as Blake came from the door, passed his late slip to Ms. Scott and went to face me. He smirked as he leaned down.

"W-what?!" I stuttered as his fingers lightly touch the buttons of my uniform and lingered there for awhile then I looked down... OH MY!! That's it!! My buttons aren't properly buttoned up and my lacy red bra was

peeking out!! I can't imagine that I went from home to school like this!! Especially at the bus!! Oh my god... No wonder the boys are acting like this.

Blake's fingers started moving and he buttoned up my shirt properly. As he finished buttoning it up properly, he straightened himself and smirked.

"Button up your shirt properly, babe." he said as he winked before he took off to his seat far from mine.

I just stood in front of the class with my mouth slightly open as everyone in our class became silent. They too seem to be shocked as to why Blake did that.

As Blake sat, his friends gave him some questioning looks and he seems to read it and said smugly, "She's my girlfriend now. So whoever messes up with her will pay." And then his friends started laughing like they think he's crazy or lying which is absolutely true.

"I'm serious guys. I'm her boyfriend now." he said shyly which made it look like he's really telling the truth. I could see that everyone was listening to what he's saying and seems to believe it. Wow, this guy acts

really well. He really could win an Oscar with his skills.

Then Blake's friends started cheering for him. I could see that they are happy for him.

"Wow Blake! You're really awesome man!" Ray said.

"Have you been in drugs last Christmas? Just make sure you'll not kill each other."

Drew joked.

"New year, new girlfriend! Congrats dude! You've finally escaped Stacey's spell! Haha!" Greg said as he one-arm-hugged Blake.

Our class started and soon ended. I wasn't in the mood to listen today since it was just some normal back-to-school scenario. The teacher will just ask how our vacations went and some stuff like that. So, I just spent my time thinking of what will happen today. I know that Jean and Jack will be very surprised about this because I haven't mentioned about this to them. Blake and I have made a deal that we're not going to tell anyone about this so that there wouldn't be any leakage with this secret plan.

As I was on my way out the door, Blake went beside me and laced his hand with mine.

"What are you doing?" I said as I started to tug on my hand.

"We're holding hands. I mean we're supposed to hold hands, remember?" he said and I just stopped tugging my hand back. I just slowly intertwined my hand with his because this is what we're supposed to do. But why is my hand feeling electrocuted but great at the same time? Oh, it must be because... Oh I don't know!... I should just enjoy this wonderful sensation going through my hand.

"I have a great feeling that we're gonna make this very well. Good thing you left your shirt unbuttoned and then I fixed it up and we grabbed everyone's attention. Everybody really believed we're together now! I'm such a great actor!" he said smugly as he walked me to my next class.

"Shut up Blake!" I said as I smacked his head, "It's your fault that's why I was almost late and was not able to prepare very well! Your mom told me that you told her that I left already! You didn't wake me

up when she asked you to! And now what? I walked the streets, rode the bus and entered the class with everyone seeing it!"

"Don't worry, it's not a bad sight after all." He said as he smirked and I hit his head one more time. He just laughed it off.

We're now by the door of my next class, Creative Writing. Blake doesn't belong to this class and he has Music next. We have to go our separate ways now, oh thank God; my mind could be in peace for a while.

"Ok, I have to get in now." I said as I smiled and faced him to say goodbye.

I was shocked to see him looking at my face intently like he was memorizing every detail of it. I was even more shocked as he reached his hand out to stroke my right cheek with his thumb while looking at my eyes. And then he enveloped me in a hug and left without a word. I didn't know if he was just acting then since there are only a few people passing and could see us at that place and time.

Blake's POV

What just happened there? Did I just really do that to her? Maybe my body was just acting on its own, just like a reflex as my mind was constantly thinking about this plan and Syd. Yeah, maybe that's the reason why. Or maybe that's the reason what I wanted to believe and not the reason why.

Chapter 11

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 11

The classes that followed passed by in a blur. I wasn't really paying much attention to my classes today since all the teachers in my classes just talked about how fun their vacations were which I was not that interested in. My mind wandered around but mostly focused on Blake. I kept on thinking about him with these past few hours and I don't know why. I just felt something when he touched my face with his hands softly awhile ago. It's something I haven't felt before and that I couldn't explain but I somehow liked the sensation of it. I know deep inside that I would most likely feel that again since we're in this kind of situation now.

After eating lunch with Jean and Jack at our usual table, Blake came out of nowhere and sat beside me. He put an arm around my shoulder and said, "Hey cupcake! Miss me?"

"Ew. Cupcake? You're so cheesy Blake." I said. No one could know our plan, even my bestest friends could not know.

Jean and Jack shared a confused look and Blake answered their unspoken question, "Yes, we're together now. Things have changed and we realized a lot of things last Christmas, so we're here now. I hope you approve of me to be the love of the life of your best friend."

The two of them just laughed as I hit Blake's head due to embarrassment.

"Of course dude! As long as you won't hurt her or you'll not like what'll happen to you." Jack said as he laughed but knowing him, his words are true. He's like a big brother to me and Jean as my sister.

"That's why you can't attend the parties I invited you to come because you were 'busy' with some things or

should I say someone?" Jean joked and laughed as my cheeks turned a deep shade of red.

Blake just laughed along with them and said, "Thanks guys. Now, can I have my time with my honey?"

They just laughed and nodded. I said, "Stop calling me cheesy names sugar." I laughed at my own cheesy name for him, hahaha!

"Sugar? Ick! That's more cheesy than my names." He said as we stood up and walked me to my next class. The walk was fun, I must say. We debated with the cheesiest names of couples and stuff like that.

The bell rang signaling the end of the day and I stood up and went out quickly. As I reached the door, I heard a very familiar annoying voice shout, "Hey babe!" Oh, please no. No, no, no. I increased my pace towards my locker as the guy kept on shouting, "Babe, wait!"

The guy managed to catch up and was beside me now. He then slid an arm around my waist which made me jump and slap his hand away.

"Ouch, babe. You hurt my hand and my feelings." Blake said as he faked to be hurt by clutching his heart and putting on a fake sad face. I must admit he looked cute when he did that but I shoved that thought away when he put on now his infamous smirk.

He leaned down to my ear and whispered, "You better be ready and used with things like that Syd. People won't believe us if we don't do what real couples do." Feeling his breath on my ear sent shivers down my spine. I was really right when I thought that I would feel that feeling again from Blake but I was still shocked and unprepared with that coming. I know I should not be feeling this thing since we're just faking to be together here. It felt so wrong but still right at the same time. Ugh, I'm confused!

"Ok fine, sorry. I still have to learn to get use to the stuff of what 'real' couples do. Ok, happy?" I said sarcastically with his 'demands'.

"Very," He said as his smirk faded and became serious. "Kiss me Syd. Even just on the cheek."

"And why in the world would I do that?!" I said annoyed.

He motioned his head slowly towards the right and I saw Justin and Stacey standing a few steps from us to stare in our direction.

Without thinking but to have the plan in action, I grabbed Blake's face to kiss him on the cheek, yeah cheek only, but he turned his head at the right time, I mean wrong time, that the kiss that was supposed to land on his cheek landed on his lips. We were both surprised because our eyes were both open in shock but he managed to close his eyes and kiss back slowly. I was too shocked and don't know what to do. I just don't want to stand there like a statue like before but I wasn't really prepared to kiss back so I pulled back and saw confusion in his eyes so I just then hugged him awkwardly and lightly...

I guess he got the message that I was still not yet ready with stuff like that so he just hugged me back too. We stayed like that for a few seconds until we pulled back as we saw that Justin and Stacey already left.

"You still aren't prepared, are you?" He asked.

I laughed nervously and replied, "Yeah, kind of. It's just a matter of time and well maybe, sooner or later, I'd get used to it."

"Have you heard of the saying 'Practice makes perfect'?" he asked with a playful smile.

"Yeah. I heard of it and I believe in that quote, why?" I asked confused as to where this conversation will lead us.

"We have to practice our act so that you would be prepared and ready for the things to come." He said and tugged my hand towards the parking lot.

"W-WHAT!? NO!!" I shouted at him but he won't listen.

"Too late Syd. You said so yourself that you believe with that quote. And since we wanted to make this act perfect, we have to practice it." He said as he opened the passenger door of his car and shoved me in.

"Thanks gentleman!" I said annoyed and sarcastically.

"No problem, love." He laughed as I rolled my eyes. "Buckle your seatbelt and we're off to go."

"And where the heck are we going?"

"To the park."

"Park? Why there?"

"Because it is the perfect place for two people in love"

"But can't we do it in a less public place? The park is just so... public and full of people." I pointed out. We can't practice our 'couple hood' with that many people of all ages.

"That's better. We have audiences. Haha!"

"Better?! Are you insane? How could that be better?" I asked him angry now.

"We have to practice where many people could see us so that when we do it here in school, we won't get awkward and shy anymore." He said as he started to drive out of the parking lot and towards the park.

Oh what the heck? I'm going to the park with Blake to practice 'perfect couple hood' in front of many people who will be our audience. Oh joy... *cough. sarcasm. cough.*

Chapter 12

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 12

"How-to-act-as-Blake-Collins'-girlfriend-naturally Lesson no. 1: Proper body movement." Blake stated as he stood in front of me while I'm sitting on the bench.

It's already 5:00 pm now and there are still people here but not as many as it would be when it was awhile ago, ha! Thank goodness. I actually purposely made it up to this time so that there wouldn't be many people who will witness what God only knows and well Blake too, what Blake and I are going to 'practice' at the park. I told him that I'm supposed to go home because I'm still going to watch a rerun of Grey's Anatomy or I'm going to die. Haha, well he

didn't believe me that I'll really do that, which is really true by the way, but oh well I nagged him to death on our way here so he got annoyed and just drove me home. And now we're here to continue our postponed Being-A-Perfect-Couple 101.

"Proper Body Movement? Ok so what the heck does that mean?" I asked.

"Let me finish love," then he smirked and continued, "This includes how we position our arms. Like when I put my arms around your shoulders or on your waist. And how you should be comfortable when we hold hands or link arms. Those kinds of stuff, you know?" he said in a as-a-matter-of-fact tone.

"Ok so, what are we supposed to do?" I asked unsure.

Then he grabbed my hand which made me to stand up and said, "We are going to roam around this park practicing the proper body movements so be ready." Then he flashed me his infamous smirk. Again.

We started walking holding hands. It's actually kinda awkward but his hand is really soft and warm. The weather right now is cold and his warm hand is

really relaxing. Instinctively, I laced my hand in his and I felt that his hand twitched but nevertheless, held my hand tighter.

I'm not so sure how many minutes passed but it wasn't long when he took his hand away and put an arm around my shoulder and held me close. "Phase 2." he said. I just nodded and continued walking around the park. The park is really big with the big playground stuff like that.

We continued walking in silence when Phase 3 came. He removed his arm around my shoulder and put it on my waist. He held me tighter and closer to his body which really made me blush so bad. I wasn't really expecting that so when he pulled me closer, I hit my head on his muscled chest a bit hard. Yes, I hit my head and it really was a bit painful with how much force he exerted to pull me. He looked down at me and said, "Ooops, sorry that was a bit hard. Sorry, hehe." He laughed nervously and he was blushing!

Blake's POV

Oh my good Lord, why am I feeling this way? We were just practicing the things I usually do with all

the girlfriends that I had, but why am I like this? Like I can't control myself, my heart, it was pounding millions of miles per hour! Like I don't wanna do this practice step-by-step, and just proceed to the most exciting part. (you will know later what the most exciting part and it's PG10, haha PG10! Nothing bad, you'll see :D)

Now I have to move to Phase 3. I put my arm around her waist and pulled her closer and, oh crap! I pulled her a bit harder than what I intended and she hit her head on my chest! I was really nervous that I haven't controlled the force I exerted to pull her. She stopped walking and rubbed the part of her head which was hit and I apologized and covered my nervousness with a laugh which was useless because you could hear the nervousness on my laugh.

She just laughed along awkwardly and we proceeded walking. When we reached the bench where we started walking awhile ago, I said, "Let's take a break for a while. That was some kind of a walk."

"Haha yeah. Wait, I'll just go buy some drinks." she said.

"No, wait here. I'll go buy." I offered then smiled. She then just nodded and mumbled "Ok" and I went to buy drinks to a store cart near us.

Syd's POV

That was really some kind of a walk! I felt my heart beating so hard that I thought it would explode or something. While I was in Blake's arms, I felt like I was secured, protected and nothing bad would happen to me and that I was really handled with care. If things would always be like this, oh I would gladly do it. Haha, just kidding. But seriously, Stacey was really stupid for choosing Justin the Jerk over Blake who I now think of as caring and protective.

Blake came back with two juices in can and we drank it.

"Ok so moving on. We are now done with Lesson no. 1! Let's now move on to our Lesson no. 2: Eye contact!" he said back to his old self again.

"Ok, so what are we going to do? Have a staring contest or something?" I said while finishing my drink.

"Errrttt!" he made a sound of wrong in a game show and shook his head and index finger, "We are not going to have a staring contest but something like that nonetheless."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"We're just going to stare at each other's eyes but it's not a contest so of course, we could blink as much as we want but not the annoying blink, you know?" he said.

"Ok." I said and then we positioned ourselves on the bench properly to be able to stare at his chocolate brown eyes.

We are staring at each other's eyes and we don't care as to what was happening to our surroundings at the moment. I felt like I was drowning in his eyes and I could feel he was also in mine. The sun is now starting to set but we don't care since we are trapped in our own worlds until a butterfly landed on Blake's nose and he sneezed. I was sent back to reality when he sneezed and I was really unsure as to what was happening at first until I found it really funny when

he won't stop sneezing. I laughed at him while he was sneezing and can't stop.

"Stop laughing. It's not funny you know?" he said out of breath from sneezing.

"Hahaha. Ok, I'll try but it was really funny."

"Ugh, whatever. Hey, want some ice cream? I think I needed one to cool down my senses." he asked.

"Oh, ok sure."

"Flavor?"

"Vanilla." I replied then he went to buy the ice cream. But you know what, I was kinda thankful with that butterfly and disappointed at the same time because if it didn't land on Blake's nose, he wouldn't sneeze and our stares will continue up to I don't know what time which I think is good so that we could go home now and rest or bad because his eyes are really amazing that I wouldn't mind staring at it again. Oh well...

He went back with two ice cream cones in both hands, both vanilla. He handed me mine and I thanked him.

When I was about to have a lick, he stopped my hand midair. "We are now going to Lesson no. 3: Doing sweet things together while you're on my lap."

"What? Come on, we are just going to eat ice cream. What's sweet about that?" I asked.

"Tsk, tsk, tsk. You're still an amateur Syd. When a couple eat ice cream together while the girl is on the boy's lap, it becomes extremely sweet." he answered then patted his lap, "Sit now here baby."

"Shut up! You sound like a perverted old man." I said as I awkwardly positioned myself on his lap.

"Hahaha, is that so?"

"Yes. Wait, you like vanilla too?" I asked out of curiosity.

"Yeah, it's plain but sweet. Someone made me realize that." he smiled.

"Who?"

"When I was still a kid, a girl offered me her ice cream when I dropped my chocolate ice cream with sprinkles on the floor and cried." he replied remembering his childhood memories.

"Wait, you shared a vanilla ice cream with her?"

"No, we didn't share. She gave me hers before she even had a lick. She said I could have it and that it's better than my chocolate ice cream with sprinkles that's why should already stop crying." he said with a sigh.

While he was telling me this, I remembered that this incident had happened to me also exactly the same. It's just that I was the one who gave my vanilla ice cream to the boy but I don't know him or his name. I looked back at Blake and saw that his eyes were sad.

"What's wrong?" I asked concerned.

"It's just that I really wanted to see that girl again I just don't know how, where or when. I don't even know her name..." he said sadly.

"Is this girl the one you mentioned to me before whom you love and that you were waiting for her to come?"

"Yeah. Her family moved and I don't know where. I guess I'll just be waiting for her to come back here." he said.

I just nodded and thought deeply about this coincidence while eating my ice cream then he laughed.

"What?" I asked.

"You're 17 but you eat ice cream like a kid!" he laughed.

"What?" I asked confused.

"You have ice cream spread on your mouth!" he said.

"What? Where?" I said while trying to wipe it with my free hand.

"There. Oh wait, you still have it here..." he trailed off as his thumb wiped my lower lip. His thumb stayed there and I froze, well we froze.

The wind blew across us and I moved my head to the side and said, "Hahaha, thanks. I really tend to eat like a kid when I eat ice cream." And then I took another lick on my ice cream.

"Hahaha, I guess." he replied.

We ate in awkward silence. After eating, I stood up and stretched.

"Ok so, lesson no. 3 is done. Next!" I said to enlighten our mood.

"Quite eager to learn?" he said seductively to my ear as he stood up beside me.

"Whatever Blake. Don't be very much conceited of yourself." I said as I poked him.

"Hahaha. Ok so, Lesson no. 4: Hug," he said, "We just know how to hug in public, that's all." Then he opened his arms wide for me.

"Ok, hug." Then I went in the circle of his arms and hugged him. I can't help myself but to enjoy this wonderful sensation that was running in my veins as I hugged him. He really smells good with a hint of

cologne and I could feel his toned chest muscles in a non-painful way. We broke apart at the same time and just smiled. He grabbed my hand to sit back on the bench and looked me in the eyes.

"Ok here's our last and most excit-, I mean most important and crucial lesson maybe..." he said while he rubbed the back of his neck not knowing how to say it.

Why am I having this feeling that he was shy to tell me this? I'm not so sure where he is leading me with this intro but I think...

Chapter 13

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 13

Chapter 13 (EDITED)

"You have to kiss me." Blake said seriously but with a hint of red highlighting his cheeks.

"W-what? You mean I have to kiss you on your lips here?" I asked a bit shocked and unsure how to react. I mean, come on, we are going to kiss in front of this people and ugh, I don't know...!

"Yes. Well you know, so that you'd get used to kissing me in public when we're together," he paused then composed himself, "Well, that's what normal couples do right, babe?" he winked then came back to his normal cocky side.

"Ugh- fine! But don't expect me if I acted differently. I'm just really inexperienced with this kind of stuff..." then I trailed off.

"Don't worry, I know..." then he started to lean closer. I could feel my heart beating so fast that I thought it would go out of my chest.

He then leaned for a go and I followed suit with an excruciatingly low pace. He seemed to notice this then and looked at me with a glint of mocking in his eyes. "Hey, don't tell me you're afraid of me, huh? Afraid that I'd think you're a bad kisser? Aww, don't worry. Even if you're bad like that, I can still make-up for it because I'm already an expert on it! Aww, my baby here is terrified!" then he smirked.

Me? Afraid because I'm a bad kisser? The cocky jerk! He didn't have to tell me that I'm afraid of kissing him because I'm not a good kisser and he's one. For his information, I'm not afraid to kiss him! I'm not! Well, I'm kind of scared a teensy-weensy bit but no, I'm not terrified! Certainly not. Hell no, I'm not terrified.

"Ha! You're afraid-" I then cut him off as I crashed my lips onto his. He was shocked at first and then just grinned as I continued kissing him more. Ha! Told ya I'm not afraid!

The kiss became heated and passionate and that I just forgot that we were in a park full of people around us. We went on like that for minutes until we both pulled apart for air. "You think you really are that inexperienced?" he said with a chuckle.

"Well, I have to do it because you thought I was terrified because I'm a bad kisser which I'm totally not." I said proudly.

"If taunting you would make you kiss me like that, well hell, I would do that all the time!" he said smugly before I smacked him on his harm a bit hard. "Hey! That wasn't nice!"

"Well taunting me on purpose just so I would kiss you like that wasn't nice either!" I huffed in annoyance as I crossed my arms on my chest. He then copied my action. "And don't copy my action!"

"And don't copy my action!" he said after me.

"Hey! Don't repeat what I just said!" I said glaring.

"Hey! Don't repeat what I just said!" he repeated while laughing a little.

"You are so immature!"

"You are so immature!" he repeated again.

"Ugh!" I scoffed.

"Ugh!" he repeated then scoffed like me. Why is he so annoying! Aha! I know!

"I'm so... gay!" I said with a smirk.

He thought for a moment before saying with a smirk, "I'm so... hot!"

Argh! Boys are really frustrating! I don't get it!

"So uhmm, thanks for-..." I was cut off when Blake got out of the driver's seat to open the door on my side when we arrived at our house.

He then opened the car door for me and I hopped out. "Thanks for driving me home."

"No prob. I also want to thank you for well... Uhmm... Doing great today and yeah... haha..." he laughed nervously as he scratched the back of his head.

"Haha... Ok, so uhmm... I guess I'll just see you tomorrow in school."

"Yeah. See you tomorrow." He said as I went my way to the door. "Wait!" he then ran to my side.

"Yes?" I asked.

"This Saturday at the Last Supper Club 7 pm. Justin and Stacey will have their date. I was wondering if you're still on to go there with me?" he asked with expectantly.

"Sure, no problem. I'll go with you there." I said.

He smiled and said, "Thanks. So uhmm... Good night."

"Haha yeah, good night." Then went inside our house.

If things are always gonna be good like this with Blake, maybe one day, I wouldn't mind pretending to be Blake's girlfriend forever. Oh shoot! What am I thinking? Maybe I'm just hungry that's why I'm

thinking this kind of stuff. I gotta go prepare dinner now...

AN: before, I said it was pg10 but I think this chap is really pg13. hahaha... :p oh well...

Chapter 14

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 14

Tonight is the night. My first date with Blake according to our plan at the Last Supper Club. I spent the whole last night of thinking what to wear since we're going to a fine dining restaurant and now I ended up wearing a simple dress like this:

http://content.nordstrom.com/ImageGallery/store/product/Gigantic/14/_5677734.jpg

I just curled my hair at the ends and put some light make-up on. Well, I don't look bad and I looked pretty presentable if I'm gonna look at myself. Blake would pick me up at 7 and it's already 6:55 pm. Well I finished preparing just in time and if he came here

late knowing that he just lives 50 steps away, oh, he's gonna be so dead. I went downstairs to wait for him and then the bell rang.

"Coming!" I called and then opened the door. "Hey, you're just in time..." I greeted him and smiled and then I think I caught my breath at what I saw. Blake was standing on our front porch looking oh-so-gorgeous in his red button-up shirt which fits him perfectly making people know that there are some toned muscles underneath it. And his hair, oh my God. It's sort of like the messy look but it suits him very well and makes him look so sexy. I didn't imagine in my life that I'm gonna look in awe at Blake because of his gorgeousness. As I was staring at him, he was staring at me too. Well, what can I say, there are really unexpected things that come to our life.

"Yo Syd, fascinated much?" Blake said as he smirked snapping me out of my thoughts. I didn't quite get what he said so I just looked at him dumbfounded. "Hahaha! I thought so. Don't worry you can stare and fantasize me the whole night but we gotta go now."

That one really brought me back to my senses. "Oh come on Blake, don't be so full of yourself. What makes you think that I was fantasizing you?" I hissed at him.

"Your malicious look." He simply said and smirked.

"Ugh! You're impossible." I said as I took my bag and went to his car leaving him behind.

Blake's POV

I was really nervous and excited at the same time with my date with Sydney tonight. I really don't know why I'm very choosy with the clothes that I would wear. I decided to wear the new shirt I bought 2 days ago and fixed my hair in a messy but sexy look. I know girls fall for that hahaha :D.

Anyways, I'm already outside her house and I could hear that she's already downstairs so I decided she's probably ready to go so I rang the bell.

She opened the door and said something which I didn't quite get because I think I caught my breath on my throat. She was standing there looking oh-so-beautiful wearing that white dress with light make-

up which outshines her natural beauty. She let her hair fall back and curled it at the ends perfectly. She was really beautiful. She must've been fascinated by me too since she couldn't speak and was just staring at me too. I tried to snap myself from my trance and tried to cover myself by trying to annoy her to avoid the awkwardness. Well, she was annoyed and left me laughing at her front porch with her reaction as she strolled to the passenger seat of my car and I followed suit and drove to our destination. I have this premonition that this night would be very awesome.

Syd's POV

Blake could be very annoying but nevertheless, he's really fun to be with. Our drive to the restaurant was filled with laughs and fun conversations about anything and everything under the sun. I could say that we're really starting to be good friends now.

We arrived to our destination and as I was about to open the passenger door, he stopped me and went out for him to open the door for me. He also held the

restaurant door open for me which I find that really gentleman of him.

Right now we're inside the fine dining restaurant which I haven't been of.

"Blake Collins." Blake said to the hostess and the hostess smiled flirtatiously at him but Blake just put an arm around my shoulder to show her that he's already "taken by me". The hostess then glared daggers at me and fulfilled her job by leading us to the reserved table. She left after telling us that our waiter will come afterwards.

"Wow, that hostess must hate me to death for doing nothing." I said as she left.

"Hahaha. Don't worry she's just jealous because I'm with you." Blake smirked.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, whatever." And then my eyes became wide like golf as we both saw the reason why we're here.

"Don't look at them. Look at me. Act casual. Don't let them know we know that they're here." Blake said continuously as I followed what he said as Justin and

Stacey sat ear-shot close to our table. We should act perfectly as a real couple and make our plan in pursuit. "Watch them closely later. I have a funny surprise for you." Blake said as he just smiled making me confused as to what he was saying.

The waiter came to us and gave the menu. We told him that we'll just call him when we're ready to order. Right now, Blake and I are using the menu book to hide our faces as we observe the two, Justin and Stacey, not after 5 minutes in the restaurant are making out already. Yeah, they're already making-out in this fine-dining restaurant after they sat on their seats. I really don't get what they are really doing here if they're just going to make-out here.

"Ugh! They're disgusting. Why did they come here if they're just going to make-out in the first place." I said as I hid my face behind the menu. Yeah, if you're going to picture it out, we really looked crazy that's why our waiter who was waiting for us to call him was giving us funny looks when he will take a glance at us, but whatever.

"Yeah. I was actually thinking the same thing. Oh hey, here she is! Watch closely. This is my funny surprise." Blake said as Justin stopped kissing Stacey because the waitress approached them.

The waitress, who was, I must say, smokin hot, was obviously flirting with him because it was obvious in her actions which makes Stacey very pissed since Justin was also flirting back. It was funny to see Stacey's pissed-off face. Hahaha! And, oh, hey! Go away people! I couldn't see it anymore! Argh! Some new customers blocked my view of Justin and the waitress' flirting moment and Stacey having smoke coming out of her ears and turning red because of anger. I couldn't miss any part of this funny scene so I pushed Blake aside so that I could take a better look at what's going on with the two, I mean three because plus the waitress over there.

"Hey! Move it!" Blake said as he pushed me back to my position whereas the new customers still won't take their seats and block my view.

"I can't see. The people are blocking my view." I said as I moved close to Blake to take a better look.

Okay, there, perfect view. The waitress left as Justin winked at her. Stacey then became hysterical and started shouting on how his boyfriend flirts with the 'ugly waitress' as she calls her. The waitress is not really ugly for she was fairly beautiful. She then passed our table and gave Blake the thumbs up sign. I looked at Blake to know what she meant by the thumbs up and he whispered, "I paid the waitress yesterday to flirt with Justin in front of Stacey because I know Justin couldn't help but to flirt back with hot girls no matter the circumstance is."

"Wow, you're a genius Blake!" I complimented him for the first time, "but why didn't you tell this to me?"

"I just want to surprise and give you a 'gift' in our 'first date'." he said, "but don't worry, next time, I'm going to tell you everything I'm planning. But today, it's a surprise so it's actually a secret first. So now that you know about, did you like my surprise?"

"A job well done." I said as we both high-fived.

We went back to observing the 'couple' which made us have our silent laughing fits. And then when Stacey smacked Justin's head and face, Blake and I

just couldn't help it anymore and burst laughing so loud that we caught attention from the other customers and of course, Justin and Stacey's too. We immediately covered our faces with the menu and acted as if we don't know what's happening around us and became so mesmerized at looking at the pictures of the food in the menu which I'm not very familiar to.

Now we're dead. They already saw us! What are we supposed to do now? I took a peek from the menu and saw that Justin and Stacey are coming near us with confused expressions. Here goes nothing...

Chapter 15

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 15

In life, unexpected things really come in unexpected times. That's what I learned while I'm here at the restaurant because when we were about to be caught by Justin and Stacey, Blake did the unexpected.

Blake grabbed my face and kissed me while I was still holding the menu to hide our faces as Justin and Stacey came near.

"Excuse me, but may we know why you are laughing at us?" Stacey asked still pissed.

We didn't respond because how could respond if our lips were locked.

Stacey, being the type who is not used to being ignored, snatched the menu book I was holding to cover our faces and revealed Blake and I locked in each other's lips.

Blake then pulled away and shouted a bit, "Do you mind? I'm having a moment with my girlfriend here!" he said and then his expression turned to surprise, "Oh hey! Justin, Stacey! I'm sorry; I didn't notice it's you guys. What are you doing here?"

At first, I don't get what Blake was doing until I realized that he was pretending that we're too caught up in our kiss that's why we didn't notice Justin and Stacey here. Blake is really a good actor I must say, but he really should tell me his plans so that I'd be prepared.

"Yeah Justin, Stacey, what are you guys doing here? Are you also going to have your dinner date here like us?" I asked innocently.

"H-huh? Wait, what are you talking about? You guys don't know we're here?" Stacey asked.

"Well like yeah. If I know then I wouldn't be asking what you guys are doing here." I asked in an as-a-matter-of-fact tone.

"And also, if I knew that you guys are gonna be here, then surely, I would have brought our date to some other restaurant, not here." Blake said cockily.

"Ugh! Whatever!" Stacey said and tugged on Justin's hand back to their table.

Justin's POV

What are they doing here? With all the restaurants in the city, they went here! But I must say, Sydney looks so hot right now. She looks better than Stacey if she would dress herself like that. I'm stupid that I didn't notice this before.

Stacey's POV

I really hate this day! My gosh! How could they be here! I'm sure they saw us fighting because I swear I saw them laughing at us! Ugh! I hate it when they joined their smart-ass attitudes! It's the entire waitress' fault!

Syd's POV

Blake and I looked at each other and high-fived again. We then called our waiter who patiently waited for us and he said, "Nice one." We just laughed with him and gave our orders.

He delivered our food and we ate happily while having our fun conversations. Both of us could feel the stares and glares coming from Justin and Stacey. They were watching and listening to us since we're just ear-shot close and then I had an idea. I pulled my phone out and typed in 'Go with the flow with what I'm about to do' and passed it to Blake under the table and he smiled.

I held Blake's face in my hand and looked at him in the eyes and said, "You know what Blake?"

"What?" he said as he was playing with the fingers of my other hand.

"You're such an awesome boyfriend. Only an idiotic bitch would cheat on you for some dumb-ass dude." I said and smiled, "I'm really lucky I have you."

Blake laughed and said, "Nah, I'm luckier because I have you and you're the most amazing girl in the whole world. Only a stupid jerk would cheat on you for some bitch."

We could see from the corner of our eyes that we're really getting on their nerves. Their foods are practically over chewed since they chew their food hardly. If I could just laugh right now, I definitely would but I'm still in the middle of an act.

"No, I'm luckier because the best guy in the world was the one who taught me how to kiss properly." I said as I touched Blake's face with my index finger. Never in my life I imagined myself to flirt with some guy like this, but knowing that it's Blake, I don't know why but I feel comfortable around him.

"Hahaha, but I'm still luckier because knowing that you just started to know how to kiss, yet you are already amazing. More amazing than the slutty girls out there who still kiss sloppily knowing that they had already experienced kissing many guys." Blake said as he just leaned in and closed the gap between

us and ended our conversation about who's luckier between us.

I again felt the fireworks inside me and the rush of passion as Blake kisses me. I was lost in our kiss and don't care about my surroundings anymore. We continued kissing as we hear a faint girl shouted "I hate the both of you!" and stormed out the restaurant while a guy called out to her "Stacey! Stacey!"

We both heard and know that Justin and Stacey were gone out of the restaurant but we still continued kissing. After a moment, Blake pulled away and smiled. He then paid our food bill and went home. The drive was silent but not awkward.

When we reached our house, he opened the door for me again and walked with me up to our font porch and I turned to say goodbye to him.

"Hey, thanks for tonight. I really had fun." I said

"No prob. I really had fun too just seeing their angry faces." he said and we both laughed. The laughed stopped and then turned to the dreaded awkward

silence. We were just standing there staring at each other's eyes.

He smiled and said, "You know what?"

"What?" I said smiling.

"I'm the one who is really lucky." he stated

"What do you mean?"

"I'm lucky to have you here with me." he said as he once again closed the gap between us with and sealed the night with a kiss.

Chapter 16

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 16

The next few days of me and Blake being 'together' were really funny and enjoyable and fun. Funny because the people in school were really shocked and surprised when they saw me and Blake. They were shocked because the two people in the world whom they can't expect to stand being with each other in a same room and thinking that Blake and I share the same air to breathe makes us suffocate would be walking down the halls hand-in-hand. Their faces were like 0_o... haha! They were really funny to watch!

Enjoyable and fun because I discovered that Blake was really a funny and hyper guy once you get to

know him better. We were now comfortable with each other so that's really a great improvement between us. I really didn't expect that Blake and I would really go well together even though we were just pretending to be together. We were playing it like its real and if I didn't know better, I might be falling for him hard. But I have to control myself because if not, I'd be in a big trouble.

Finally, today is Friday. Oh thank God, the week's about to close.

"Yo Syd, wanna come to our house and hang-out tonight?" Jean asked me as we went to our last class for the day.

"Nah sorry, I can't. I have some baby-sitting duties today. I can't miss it. I have promised to them already since last week." I replied apologetically.

"Hey, it's alright. Maybe next week?" she asked hopefully.

"Yeah sure! No prob!" I said.

School ended and I went home and took a bath before I go to my baby-sitting duties. I should be

there at 7 pm so I still have time to rest and relax. Wanna know who I would baby-sit? Yep, the Collins twins, Sander and Sandy! Mr. and Mrs. Collins asked me if I could watch out for their children over the night since they'd be going to a social gathering and would not be able to come back before midnight. Blake? Nah, he's gonna somewhere with his friends I think that's why he would not be able to baby-sit his siblings so here I am. Well, I wouldn't call it 'baby-sitting' the twins but more like playing and having fun since they were like the brother and sister I never had. I really enjoyed watching out and playing with them.

Time flies so fast and it's already 7 pm. I went downstairs with my stuff and went to the house next door. I rang the doorbell and the door was opened by someone unexpected.

"Just in time Syd. Just in time." Blake greeted me by the door as he opened it with a big smile on his face.

"What are you doing here? I thought you're out with your friends?" I asked.

"Nah, I changed my mind." He replied.

"Ok, where are your siblings?" I asked.

"They're at their friend's sleep over party." he answered.

"Huh? I thought I was supposed to baby-sit them? Oh well, I'll just go now." I said as I turned around to leave but he caught my arm before I do so.

"Why are you leaving?" he asked.

"Uh well because I'm supposed to baby-sit your brother and sister but since they're not here, I'm going home already." I answered simply.

"Uh-uh Syd. You can't go now. You still haven't fulfilled your baby-sitting duties. My parents already paid you, don't they?" I looked at him shocked. I don't get what he is implying but he was right when he said that I was already paid. His parents already paid me before hand with a more than enough salary for a night of baby-sitting and I've already spent that to buy a new version of Ipod nano with camera. XD

"I'll just return the money maybe... next week..." I said unsure. Blake seemed to notice this and he knows that I have a new Ipod that's why he smiled

bigger. "Besides, there's no one I would baby-sit, ya know?"

"Haha! There still is... Me!!" he said hyperly like a kid.

I was like 0_o... "Are you kidding me? You want me to baby-sit you?"

"Yes yes yes!!!" he replied happily like a kid.

Ok so I'm confused right now, "The only instruction to me is to baby-sit your parents' kids-"

"But I'm still my parents' kid you know? And I'm still a minor so that still makes me a kid!" he said tugging my hand inside.

"Ok ok ok..." I said as I laughed seeing a hyper Blake.

We went inside the living room and I saw two cans of Monster drink. Oh, no wonder why he's so hyper now.

"So Blake, what do you wanna do?" I asked as I popped some skittles placed on the table in my mouth.

"I don't know," then he thought for a moment, "Ah! Let's bake some cookies!" then he tugged my hand to the kitchen.

The ingredients were all placed on the kitchen table and we started mixing stuffs. Flour, eggs, water, etc. We had music blasting off in the background from his big speakers so we were acting and dancing like retards while doing and mixing the cookie dough. We had more fun when it's time to mold the dough. We made some out of this world shapes and be creative. We then placed them in the oven and saw the left over ingredients. I then felt some powder flew to my face. I looked up to see Blake laughing at me while holding the left over bag of flour. I quickly composed myself and grabbed the other bag of flour and threw some at him. And the flour fight began. We continued laughing our asses off as we threw flours at each other and see our white faces.

He was chasing me then as I slid on the floor now slippery floor because of the flour and he also followed and slipped. We were lying on the floor with him on top of me. We just laughed and he was

the first one to stop. He then stared into my eyes and inched his face closer to me. I also did what he was doing but...

"Stop." I whispered.

He looked shock, hurt and confused, "Why?"

"I can smell something burning..." I said and both of our eyes went wide and stood-up right away and went to the oven. We took the cookies out and saw that it's slightly overcooked. Good thing we took it out immediately. We then looked at it and then just laughed.

"So what do you wanna do next?" Blake asked as we cleaned the mess.

"Movie? I dunno..." I said.

"Sure! I have some new DVDs there. But no chick flicks please? I'm too hyper right now to watch some chick flicks." he said with puppy-dog eyes.

"Hahaha sure. No problem. You choose what movie. Anything's cool for me." I said. "Anything?" he smirked.

"Yeah." I answered and I instantly regretted I said that.

"Ok, then we'll watch Friday the 13th!" he said happily. (AN: I still haven't watched this film.. oh well.. :D)

Oh kill me now, horror? Seriously, it's about 9 pm now and for sure, I wouldn't be able to sleep easily tonight.

"Ok, I changed my mind, let's just watch uhm..." I can't think of any movie so I scanned the room and saw Hannah Montana The Movie which I'm sure belonged to Sandy, she's a big fan, oh well, "Let's just watch Hannah Montana The Movie! It's so COOL ya know!" I said lamely.

Blake stopped mid-air as he was assembling the dvd and turned to look at me, "Where is the Syd that I came to know? What did you do to her?" he said as he acted panicked.

I just laughed at him, "Seriously, I'm desperate not to watch any horror films right now. I'd go for Hannah Montana just not Friday the 13th."

"Why? Is Sydney Parker scared?" he smirked. I just looked at him. "Oh my gosh, Sydney's scared!" he said in a mocking girly tone.

Oh how could he say that! "Who's afraid?! Am not! Fine, bring that horror film on!" I said as I plopped myself on the couch.

Blake just laughed and put shutter in, hit play and sat beside me on the couch. We ate the cookies we baked while watching the movie. I would cover my face with a pillow when there's a scary part and then my scream would be muffled with the pillow. Blake would just laugh at the scary parts and laughed harder when he saw how I reacted to it. He seemed to know this movie already while I don't so before a scary part would appear, he would call me and tell me to look since the scene is important and have to look and then some creepy thing would be on screen and since I'm not with the pillow, I would scream so loud that it could wake the whole neighborhood.

Somewhere at the middle of the movie, Blake stretched and knocked my pillow out and threw it to the kitchen where the lights are closed. How could

he? He knew that I wouldn't be able to get up since the movie continues flashing some scary things and that's the only pillow here so I'm stuck with my hand keeping me from screaming.

Little did I know, Blake's arm was creeping above me until I was securely wrapped around by is arm. I let his arm there since well, I like the feeling of it lol :). And since it's starting to get really cold in here, I went closer to his body for warmth and ended up cuddling with him. Since my pillow's already far away at the dark hole aka the kitchen with the closed lights, I just hid my face on Blake's chest as he held his arms around me tighter when there comes a scary part.

I feel so comfortable in Blake's arms that's why I can't help but to slowly drift off to sleep as the movie was about to end. Before I finally fall asleep, I felt Blake brush the hair out of my face, whispered good night and kissed my forehead.

At this point, I am now absolutely positive that, I am in love with the guy I used to hate and the guy I have

to pretend to love which wasn't so hard. I, Sydney Parker, am now seriously in love with Blake Collins.

Chapter 17

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 17

"I can't believe Justin would go to a place like this. Moreover, have a date here!" I said as we arrived at the Theater to watch a Romeo and Juliet play.

"Haha! I guess his taste for a sweet valentine's date is this kind of stuff." He just laughed it off as he parked the car.

Today is February 14, Valentine's Day, Justin and Stacey have a date which means I also have a 'date' with Blake. I'm actually more than grateful for Justin and Stacey to have their Valentine's date because that also means that I'd also be able to spend my Valentine's with Blake.

After the baby-sitting thing at their house, I've just learned to accept that I already fell for Blake but no way in hell would I tell him that. I guess I'm a good actor too since I've managed to be my normal self when I'm with him even though deep inside I feel like fainting and screaming because my heart wouldn't stop beating so fast that I thought it would just explode. But I've got everything under control.

But sometimes my body betrays me because there was a time when we were eating ice cream and you know how messy I am when I eat ice cream, so some ice cream were dripping somewhere on the corner of my mouth and Blake's thumb brushed on it so it won't drip on my shirt. Blood immediately rushed to my face and he saw it. He smirked and said, "You really look cute when you blush like that." And he licked the corner of my mouth where there were still some ice cream spots. I just smacked his head and he just laughed and took my hand walked away with two of us laughing.

I know deep inside that I shouldn't be holding unto the chance that he would like me too since

everything that we do are just an act, a pretension. Yes, we are friends now and that's all that I am to him whereas he is more than that to me.

"There they are. Hold on to me." Blake said as we hooked our arms together. We then came to be face to face with Justin and Stacey once again.

"Justin, Stacey, what a pleasant surprise. I never imagined that you guys would have your Valentine's date here." Blake said.

"Oh, what can I say, Justin is just a romantic guy after all that's why he brought me to a romantic date like this." Stacey said with a smirk. Now I can see what Stacey and Blake have in common, they like to smirk.

"What? You were the one who insisted on bringing me here! If I didn't know better, I would think you just wanted to go here to see the actor who would portrait Romeo." Justin said while rolling his eyes.

Stacey nudged his stomach and he grunted which made Blake and I stifle our laughter.

"Oh no, don't believe him. We better go now. I hope you enjoy the show. Ciao!" Stacey said and left us.

Blake then I burst laughing. "Ok, that was unexpected and funny!" I said.

"I agree to that." Blake said laughing and then we went to our seats.

The show started and not ten minutes of the play I yawned. Blake looked at me and I mumbled, "I'm sleepy." How could I not? I just finished doing a science research paper and I haven't gotten much sleep in the last few days.

Blake just gave me a weak smile and pulled my head to rest on his shoulders. Then he wrapped his arms around me and I fell asleep. For 15 minutes only. I couldn't sleep because of the actors' poor voices echoing around the room and I can't take it so I just sat up straight.

"Look at that Romeo." Blake said pointing Romeo to me. When I looked up, my jaw literally fell. The actor of Romeo looks so anorexic and gay. Why would Stacey want to go to this boring play just for that kind of Romeo?

"I know right. That Romeo looks so gay and I don't know what've gotten to Stacey's mind." as Blake said that, Romeo said something and he made something so funny which made Blake and I laughing our heads off. People started looking in our direction and we covered our laughs with a cough but no one was fooled. We just looked at each other and trying to stifle our laughter.

The play went on and man! I was so bored! I could see that Blake was bored as I am too.

"See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O, that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!" Romeo, Blake and I said at the same time.

Blake and I looked at each other and laughed. "How did you know that line?" we asked at the same time.

"Haha! I once became Romeo in a school play. And it was not a very good experience." Blake said as he shook his head.

"Really? Wow. That's cool. Blake as Romeo. Haha! Well, I was just a fan of these classics but if they perform it like this, I'd rather watch Friday the 13th."

I said recalling the horror movie we both watched in their house.

"Haha! You're right! Hey, since this play is so boring and so cheesy, let's ditch this place!" Blake said as a very bright idea came to him.

"Oh come on!" I said and went to his car.

"Where are we going?" I asked as Blake started the engine.

"Since today is Valentine's Day, I wouldn't want to waste it to some boring play so we are going to..." Blake said and faced me to smirk, "Secret."

"What?!" I asked bewildered.

"You'll just see later where we I would take you. And I promise that it's not boring as to that play and we would really have fun!" Blake said in his excited childish tone.

We talked like normal friends on our way to the place and we just had fun while talking about anything and everything. We then stopped to a place

which was very familiar to me. It was an ice skating rink.

"Let's go!" Blake said and we went inside. Blake paid for our tickets and then we took 2 pairs of ice skating shoes. I admit it that I don't know how to ice skate. I once had my most embarrassing moment here when I fell and caused other kids to fall too.

Blake was then putting his skate shoes on while I just sat and stared mine like it was a dead cat. I don't wanna repeat and have that most embarrassing moment again and now that Blake is here with me.

"What's wrong?" he went and kneeled in front of me grabbing my skate shoes.

"Uh Blake, I don't think this is a good idea." I said.

"Why?"

"Well because you know, I don't know how to skate and I've had my most embarrassing moment here." I said shyly.

"What happened?" he asked smiling but his eyes were really curious.

"Well, I don't know how to skate and when I fell at the center of the rink, I knocked other children down with me. And now, I don't want that to happen again. It was so embarrassing!" I said like a kid and I could feel my face flush.

"Haha! That was embarrassing, but don't worry I'm here okay?" he said that as he held my hand, "I will teach you how to skate and wouldn't let you fall and knock other people too, alright?" Blake said with a sincere smile. Now, see why I fell for him? I just nodded and he helped me put the dreaded shoes on.

"Hold on to me." Blake said as we started to walk on ice. I held on to him for dear life and we went around the rink once.

"Spread your arms and imagine like you're flying and then balance yourself." he instructed. I followed what he said and I slowly could get it. Not. I almost fell but he grabbed my waist on time. He smiled a sincere smile and held my hand in his and he skated backwards while I skated forward. As I was getting the hang of it, he slowly drifts away from me until I could manage it on my own.

After minutes of skating on my own and eventually almost falling down, almost because Blake was always at my side ready to catch me when I fall, I was finally able to skate properly on my own! I tried to skate around the rink by myself and I did it! I now learned how to skate because of Blake!

"Wow Syd, you're really a fast-learner!" Blake said when I went to him smiling so wide.

"That's all thanks to you! You were a great teacher! Thanks Blake." I said smiling happily at him.

"No problem with that." Blake said.

It was already 10:30 pm so we went home after we had our dinner at a burger joint while having fun conversations.

"Hey thank you so much Blake for tonight. I really had fun!" I said smiling as he escorted me to our front porch.

"It's okay. I also had fun with you." Blake said.

Awkward silence. It was always like this whenever we arrive at our house after we hang-out.

"Good Night, Good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be morrow." Blake said breaking the silence by saying one line from Romeo and Juliet.

I just laughed at that and said, "That was so cheesy Blake! Okay well good night to you too and well see you tomorrow. And also, thank you for catching me awhile ago. If you haven't caught me on time, history would've repeated itself."

He came close to me, held my hand and whispered, "I promised you I wouldn't let you fall again okay? Happy Valentine's Day." then he kissed my hands and enveloped me in a hug. He then pulled back and kissed my lips softly.

Nah, he was wrong. I may have not fallen on the ice but I think I'm really falling for him hard with what he's doing to me and I couldn't help but feel pity on myself because I'm falling for someone whom I was just supposed to PRETEND to love not to really love.

Chapter 18

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 18

"Do you think I'm dressed properly?" I asked Blake again for the millionth time.

"Yes, Syd. You dress just right. Now don't be paranoid. André Van Eimeren is human too you know." Blake said again for the millionth time as well.

We are now going to the phase 3 of our plan which means we are going to André Van Eimeren's Art exhibit in of the most exquisite hotels in town. Of course, we should all be in formal attires and I'm really nervous because formal gatherings aren't really my thing and also, I would be able to meet my favorite painter of all-time.

"We're here. Now relax Syd," Blake said as he parked the car and faced me, "Everything's gonna be alright. I'm here with you and I'm not going to let anything happen to you okay? I've got your back." he said and went out and open the car door for me.

He offered his arm to me and I willingly attached my arms with his. We entered the red carpeted entrance door as Blake showed our invitations which he got from his father. Their company is one of the sponsors of this event and Blake volunteered to be their company representative.

An orchestra band welcomed us as we entered the hall and rich people could be seen talking and dancing everywhere. Marvelous art works were hanged on upon almost all the walls of the place. It was simply breathtaking.

The program started and everyone settled down. We both sat at a table across Justin's and Stacey's who were sending daggers at us. Justin's family was also a sponsor for this event that's why they're here.

"Thank you so much for coming to this party. I'm really glad and honored that you appreciate my

works. Please suite yourselves and I hope you'd enjoy the night." André Van Eimeren said on stage as everyone clapped for him.

"Let's go. I'll let you meet someone." Blake whispered to me. I don't who he'll introduce to me so I just let him lead me to whoever that is.

I didn't realize what was happening at first until he led me near the stage where business-looking people could be found making a crowd around someone. Mr. Van Eimeren.

"Hey! Is that you Mr. Blake Collins? You've grown so fast! How's your father?" Mr. Van Eimeren greeted Blake as we came near.

"Yes sir. Time really flies so fast and things have changed." Blake said after they hugged each other. "My dad's good. He's just busy with some things."

"Oh, okay then," then he looked at me, "Is this young lady your girldfriend?"

"Yes sir. I'd like you to meet Sydney Parker, my girlfriend. Sydney, this is Mr. André Van Eimeren." Blake smiled as he introduced us. He knows full well

that I'm dying to know this man and tell him how awesome of a painter he is.

"Hi Sydney! Pleased to meet you!" Mr. Van Eimeren said as we shook our hands.

"Hello Mr. Van Eimeren, I'm very pleased to meet you too," I said smiling so wide, "I really love your works especially Sunset by the Boulevard. It inspires me in many ways."

He smiled and said, "Thank you so much and I'm really glad that my work inspires the youth like you."

The night went on and I learned how to socialize with the socialites with the help of Mr. Van Eimeren and Blake, who never left my side. Mr. Van Eimeren is really a good man and very humble after all the praises he got from his art works. He introduced me and Blake to his other friends and made us feel comfortable.

I was starting to enjoy this party until when I went to the bathroom to retouch my make-up and fix my hair after the wind blew so strong when we went to the garden for fresh air.

"Well, well, well... Look at what we have here?" Stacey said after minutes I came in the restroom.

"Oh, hi Stacey!" I said and rolled my eyes.

"What does a poor girl like you doing in a high-end party like this? Don't you know that you're making this event so low-class just with your presence?" she said insulting me. I didn't flinch at what she said and just continued retouching my make-up because I don't care about what she's saying. Insult me for all I care.

She went on, "I know that you're here because of Blake, but I really don't know what Blake sees in you. I mean, you're so plain, nothing so special unlike the oh-so gorgeous me."

"Is she talking to you?" a woman asked me.

"I'm not so sure ma'am, but maybe, because if not, she must be insane talking to herself." I replied sweetly to the woman who just shrugged and left.

"Are you done with your dramatic monologue? If not, just tell me because I don't wanna leave you here

talking to yourself. People might think that you are really insane." I said as I smirked.

"Ugh whatever. As I was saying," she still continued talking, "You don't belong here Sydney. You're nothing but a gold digger like your father!" Now that really irked me. "A gold digger like your father who married your rich mom. I doubt that your employee father really loved your mom; he just wanted your mom's money like you are doing with Blake. Maybe you're mom really didn't accidentally died, maybe she killed herself upon knowing the ugly truth and how much of a jerk your father is!" before she could continue talking further about my parents, my fist collided with her jaw which made her hit the wall and collapse on the ground.

"HOW DARE YOU INSULT MY PARENTS? YOU DON'T HAVE THE RIGHTS TO SAY THOSE WORDS TO THEM! YOU KNOW NOTHING!!" I said that with tears continually streaming down my eyes as I punched the life out of her. I straddled her and beat her as she lamely threw some scratches that didn't have any effect on me. Her nose was bleeding and twisted

which made me realize that her pointed nose was fake.

I could've killed her then if Blake didn't come in to stop me.

"SYDNEY STOP!" Blake said as he opened the door and rushed to me. Of course I didn't stop until he pulled me off of Stacey. I was then crashed unto Blake's chest calming me down and rubbing my back as I cried.

Justin then came rushing to Stacey. Good thing that no one else came in except for the two boys who must've been waiting for us outside.

"I don't care if you insult me. Call me a gold digger of Blake or whatever but remember this Stacey; you know nothing about my parents! My dad really loves my mom and she didn't kill herself! My dad is not a gold digger and he loves her more than anything else in this world! If you ever insult them again, I'm gonna make sure that all the cosmetic surgeons in the whole continental US combined would not be able to fix your face as to what you did to your fake nose which you now have to go back and let them fix

and put silicon in it again!" I said loudly to Stacey who was lying on the floor with Justin.

"Calm down Syd. Let's go." Blake whispered to my ear as he pulled me close and tucked my hair into place then we went outside.

Before the door was closed, I heard Justin say, "Stacey, was your nose really fake?"

Chapter 19

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 19

"It's alright Syd. Calm down now, I'm here." Blake cooed on my ear as we were sitting on one of the benches in the garden.

I still can't stop my tears of rage and sadness after the things that Stacey had said about my parents. No one could insult them.

"Hey Blake, Syd! What are you doing here? Why don't you come in-" Mr. Van Eimeren said as he approached us but stopped mid sentence seeing my tearstained face on Blake's chest. "What happened Sydney? Are you alright?"

"She just went through a heated conversation with one of our schoolmates who's also a guest here. She eventually insulted her parents so there..." Blake said as he continually rubs my back.

"I'm so sorry Syd if one of my guests did that to you." Mr. Van Eimeren said as he went close to us on the bench.

"It's alright. It's not your fault, its Stacey's." I replied.

He then gave Blake a key and said, "Blake bring her there. I'm sure she would brighten up."

Blake smiled and said, "Thanks sir. You're the best."

"No problem Blake. You know you're like my son already and since I could see how much you cared for Syd, she's like my daughter also." Mr. Van Eimeren said as he smiled.

Even though I'm confused as to what they were saying, I felt a light blush came up my cheeks as he said that Blake was like his son and me as his daughter.

"Let's go Syd. I'll bring you somewhere where I'm sure you'd be amazed." Blake said.

"Ok. Bye sir." I said to Mr. Van Eimeren as we stood and went inside the hotel.

Blake lead me to some room and used the key Mr. Van Eimeren gave him to open the door. The room was dark when we went in and I could here faint a faint sound of classical music playing on the centralized sound system of the hotel. When Blake switched on the lights, I felt like my breath was taken away for a second.

Hanging there was the huge painting of Mr. André Van Eimeren's infamous 'Sunset by the Boulevard'. I couldn't believe that I'm looking at it right in front of me.

"You liked it?" Blake said as he went beside me.

"I LOVE it!" I said smiling so wide as if I hadn't got caught in a fight awhile ago. "It's so friggin amazing!"

"Haha! I thought so that you'd really happy seeing right in front of your eyes." Blake said as he tugged my hand forward to the painting.

We spent almost 10 minutes in comfortable silence as we admired the awesome art work that costs $500,000.

"Hey, wanna sit?" Blake said after 10 minutes.

I just nodded and we sat on a bench placed in front of the art worked. I just realized that in this big spacious room, only the expensive painting, a bench, centralized sound system and aircon are the only things that could be found here. And the only people here are me and Blake. Wow, if I hadn't been too amazed by the painting, I would've realized this at the first place.

Blake just wrapped his arms around me as I put my head on his shoulder as we sat on the bench.

"Thank you Blake for helping me awhile ago. I don't know what I could've done to her if you weren't there." I said quietly but I know that he could hear it.

"It's okay Syd. I don't know if I have mentioned this to you before, but always remember that I'm just gonna be here by your side." Blake said.

"Yeah, you already said that before. In fact, you just said that some hours ago." We just laughed as we then again fell silent.

"How are you feeling now?" Blake said after moments of silence.

"A lot better. Thanks," I replied, "I really don't know that I could be so physical like that. You know I thought that when I punched you, that would be my most physical encounter with a person, but I was wrong."

"Hahaha! I thought so too because man! You punched so hard you know?" he said laughing as I punched his arm lightly.

"The reason why I punched you before was different with the reason why I punched the life out of Stacey... She insulted my parents. My parents really love each other after all the trials they've been through..." I trailed off as I felt a pang of sadness.

"It's okay Syd, I'm here. You can tell me everything. I'm willing to listen but it's alright if you don't want to tell me." Blake said as he started to rub my back.

"My mom was the only daughter of the CEO of a real estate business while my dad was just an average teenager who lives a simple life in Florida. My dad went here in San Francisco to study college because he received a scholarship in one of the universities here." I then started telling my parents' story as Blake listened intently.

"My mom was just a simple girl. She's not flashy as her rich schoolmates do in Van Allen Academy. She was in Senior year then when she met my dad who was freshman in college, in her school, in our school now.

"Van Allen Academy was hosting a school fair then where everyone is invited in and out of school. My dad was invited by his friends to go the fair and that's when they met. My mom was clumsy that's why when she and her friends were walking, she tripped on a rock and good thing that my dad has great reflexes and caught my mom in his arms just in time. It was really like destiny that set them up together. One of my dad's friends and one of mom's

friends happened to be cousins so they introduced each other and then their story began.

"Dad asked her to be his girlfriend and she said yes after some dates. Their relationship was really strong until mom's parents knew about it. They were not in favor of dad because he was not as rich as their family, but they couldn't do anything about it because she was already pregnant of me after 3 years of strong relationship.

"My grandparents' kicked her out of their house but my dad was with her all the way and never left her side. They got married and bought a house here after my dad had enough money. My dad couldn't give my mom the leisure-full life she grew up with but mo was contented having a happy and simple life with my dad and me.

"My mom then became a teacher in Val Allen Academy and she was really happy about that. She loved that school that she wanted me to study there when I get to high school. Even though we're not that rich and couldn't afford to study there, she said that

the school would give me a scholarship because of my mom's loyalty to the school.

"We continued to live happily until one rainy day. My mom fetched me on day care but while we're walking, she remembered that she forgot some important things in school so we went back to pick it up. The rain just picked its strength and poured so hard while we're on our way to the school. When we reached the campus, strong wind and lightning strike and one light post inside the school fell and was about to hit us but my mom pushed me aside and it was too late for her to escape for the light post already fell on her.

"The crash was so loud that the people from the school came rushing to us along with headmaster of that time. We went close to my mom as I was crying so hard. Someone tried to check on her but she was electrocuted and hit her head with the big light post.

"Before she lost her last breath, she told the headmaster to give me the scholarship that she wanted me to have ever since because she wanted me to have the good education and memories she

had in Van Allen Academy even though she's already dead and that she loves me and my dad more than anything else in this world. She died then because she pushed me and was left behind for the light post to crush her." By now I was already crying so hard that Blake already fully hugged me and tightly.

"My dad was at work when he received the phone call from the headmaster that my mom was already dead and to go to the morgue. I could see how sad my dad became and how the world shattered into pieces when he saw my mom lying on the bed lifeless. I could with every tear on his face how much he loves my mom.

"I didn't know what to do and he didn't know either so we just went to his parents in Florida to start a new life again without mom. We tried to live like before but it wasn't easy but we made everything together and stuck with each other. He did everything for me to have a happy childhood even though I already lost my mom. That's why my dad is the most important person to me right now and no one can say bad things to him." I was now in full

blast crying. Blake just continued rubbing my back and whispering soothing words. He then started singing...

"Here we are, in the best years of our lives.

With no way of knowing, when the

Wheel stop spinning cause we don't

Know where we're going...

And here we are, on the best day of our lives.

And it's a go, lets make it last, so cheers you

All to that, 'cause this moment's never comin' back"

I was about to fall asleep with him singing until he whispered, "Syd? You awake?"

I just nodded my head in response but still eventually fell asleep.

I then felt myself being tapped and someone calling my name. My eyes suddenly opened to see that I was lying at the back seat of Blake's car and him waking me up.

I sat up slowly and he smiled, "Let's go."

"Where? What? Where are we?" I asked confused.

"We're at the cemetery. I thought that maybe we should visit your mom's grave." he answered.

"Okay." I said as we went out of the car and onto my mom's grave.

He was holding two candles and flowers. When we reached the grave, we lit the candles and placed the flowers. We gave our silent prayers and paid our respects. It then started raining so we went back to the car.

"How did you know where my mom's grave is?" I asked Blake when we got inside the car.

He started driving and then smiled, "I called our headmaster if he knows where your mom is and he told me. Don't worry Syd, I promise you that I would always be here by your side."

"Thank you Blake for everything. Thank you for always being there for me. Thank you." I said to him.

When we reached a stop light, he turned to me, reached my hand to lace our fingers, looked at

mestraight in the eyes and said, "I know that we're just pretending this boyfriend girlfriend thing but I think I already lo-..."

Chapter 20

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 20

You guys know how it was in the movies when the boy would say something to the girl when suddenly something very unexpected would happen and when she would ask him what it was he would just shrug it off and then because of that, the girl couldn't fall asleep because her curiosity's killing her? Well yeah. That's what happening to me. It's already 2:30 am and I could not sleep because flashes from what happened last night come to my mind.

——

"I know that we're just pretending this boyfriend girlfriend thing but I think I already lo-..."

BEEP BEEP BEEP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The red light became green and the cars behind us were so impatient and honked their cars like there would be no tomorrow.

Blake was cut with what he was saying and hastily put the car into gear. He was muttering low curses under his breath as he drove off and when he saw me staring at him, he just scratched his head like he was a kid caught doing something bad.

We finally reached our house and like always, he opened the door for me and led me to our front porch.

"Well thanks again Blake for tonight and for everything." I said.

"No problem Syd. I promised you that I'll always be here right?" he replied as his eyes were boring into mine.

"Yeah. So well, awhile ago... Uhmm... When we're by the stoplight... What were you supposed to say before you were cut by the honk of the other cars?" I asked.

"Oh! Hahaha... Well... About that..." he paused for a moment and then continued, "Well that's nothing... Forget about it... I actually forgot about it already... Hahaha... Short-term memory loss I guess... I think I should eat peanuts from now on. My mom has always told me to eat peanuts since it could boost my memory and I didn't listen to her but now I would. Yes, I think I should go now to buy peanuts." he said a bit over enthusiastically.

"O...kay... If that's what you want... So uhmm... thank you again and good night." I said still confused with Blake's sudden interest with peanuts.

"You're more than welcome Syd, anytime. And good night too. I'll still buy some peanuts for my memory." Blake said.

"Okay, good night and bye.." I said lastly.

We hugged each other then he kissed my cheek before he whispered, "I'll always be here for you Sydney." Then he drove off to somewhere. To a place where peanuts are sold at midnight I suppose.

——

Well that's all that happened last night or well should I say two hours ago. I really could not sleep since curiosity's killing me with what Blake could've said to me. It could be something important but he was just cut with the stupid honks of the impatient drivers. But if it was really important, he couldn't just forget about it even though he lacked his peanut intake, right?

Argh! I surrender. I have to sleep now and stop thinking about it since I would never get my answer. I still have school tomorrow and I only got few hours left to sleep...

RRRiiinnngg!!!!!!!

I threw my alarm clock on the floor. I really hate the sound of the alarm clock and that's what wakes me up.

I sat on my bed sleepily and was about to fall asleep again when my dad knocked on the door and said, "I know you're already up. I heard your alarm clock on the floor. Now get up kiddo. You still have a fun day

waiting in school." He said the last sentence with a laugh.

Typical dad.

I took a shower and prepared myself for school. My dad gave me a ride there and wished me luck for my day in school. Well, why do I have this feeling I'm really gonna need luck for this day?...

——

I couldn't handle it anymore. It's as if my kidneys are going to burst. I now regretted having a water drinking contest with Blake awhile ago. Yup, you heard it right. A water drinking contest. Childish as it seems but it was actually fun racing to drink a one liter of water with Blake back in lunch. I lost though since I laughed at the middle of the contest making me end up coughing.

Back to now, I raised my hand to grab Mr. Lohan's attention from discussing the love triangle of Mark Anthony, Augustus Caesar and Cleopatra.

"Yes, Sydney. Do you know from what kind of people Mark Anthony and Augustus Caesar came from?" he asked me.

"The Romans sir." I answered.

"Correct." He said and continued discussing. I raised my hand again and he said, "Yes Sydney?"

"Uhmm... May I go to the rest room?" I asked.

"Sure, get your hall pass from my desk." He said and I took a hall pass and went to the rest room.

On my way to the restroom, I heard some voices.

"We're done." a guy said.

"What? What the hell are you talking about? Are you drunk?" a girl asked.

"No. And I'm talking about us being over. Meaning, I'm breaking up with you..." the guy said and I no longer listened further to this breakup scene because I already went to the restroom.

I relieved myself and as I was about to go out the cubicle, I heard girls' voices. I opened the door a bit and peeked.

"My God! I can't believe Justin broke up with you." A girl said.

"Could you please shut up? We are not yet over. No one ever breaks up with Stacey Crawford unless she told you so." Stacey said and then walked out after putting another layer of lip gloss.

Am I hearing the right words? Did Justin really break up with Stacey? But why?

——

Blake's POV (from last night)

Man! What the hell was that? That was the lamest of the lamest excuse in the entire world!! A short-term memory loss? Lack of peanut intake? What the hell? I think I've gotten an overdose of peanuts since my mom always makes peanut butter sandwiches for breakfast!

Now Sydney thinks I'm a stupid retard driving-off somewhere to buy peanuts at midnight. Just perfectly great.

I lost control of myself at the car awhile ago. The words slipped from my mouth. I wasn't really thinking when I said those things or should I say when I was about to say those things. I guess it's not yet the right time to confess that's why I'm somehow grateful with the honking cars awhile ago because they stopped me from what I was supposed to say. If I hadn't been stopped, I don't know what would happen to me and to us if Syd would just reject and ignore me upon hearing the truth. I have thought about it a million times already and I'm already sure of what I'm feeling. The truth that I have loved her ever since she moved here.

Chapter 21

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 21

Author's Note: Hey! What's up guys? I'm so sorry if it took me quite a long time before I posted this chap out... I'm just really busy with many things going on with my life, but anyway... here's the next one! Hope you'd like it!.. Comments, messages and votes would be very much appreciated!... and oh! The first part of this chap may be somewhat awkward for the guys to read... But anyways, enjoy!!! ;D

I sometimes wish I was just born as a boy. I wish it during those times of the month, you know. Because if I were a boy, I wouldn't be experiencing these

things: mood swings, pre-menstrual syndrome, dysmennorrhea. Or in short, monthly period.

Boys don't have to have periods as for girls who will have it monthly for a long period of their lifetime. Well, that's life and I just have to accept it.

It's already 12:30 pm and I just had my period like minutes ago when I went to the bathroom and I noticed that I don't have any tampons left in my cabinet, so here am I, walking down the cold streets of San Francisco going to the 7-Eleven on the corner of our street to buy tampons.

"Good evening!" the girl behind the counter greeted me. I just smiled. Good thing she's a girl because it's gonna be awkward for a guy to scan and pack the things I'm going to buy tonight.

Ok so, let's see. Where's the tampons side? Aha! There! I walked towards the aisle of tampons and was shocked to see many kinds of it. Different brands, different kinds. Now, I'm confused as to what to buy since there are so many. I took two of different brands in both hands and read the label to differentiate the two. They just look exactly the same.

"You know, I recommend you to get this one. It absorbs right away and fast!" advertised by a male voice over my shoulder while also reading the label. I spun around to see Blake Collins smirking at me.

"What?" I asked confused, shocked and embarrassed as to what he saw me holding. I hid the tampons behind my back.

"You have your monthly period right now, huh?" he asked still smirking.

"Shut-up!" I said annoyed and turned back to reading the label.

"I told you, choose this one. It's absorbs right fast!" he said snatching the other one he didn't choose and put it back in its place.

"And how would you know that? Why, have you ever tried one?" I asked smirking back.

"Haha! Of course not! My mom uses that and I was the one who's always in-charge to buy her that if she's out-of-stock. And right now she's out-of-stock, so I'm here to buy here one also." he said a bit embarrassed and scratched the back of his head.

"Hahaha! Really? Well, I guess that's cool?" I said running out of words to say at its oddity.

"I guess. So, you gonna buy that?" he asked with eyes pleading, "Please buy that so that I could have a reason to buy one and that the cashier wouldn't think of me as a creepy teenage boy who buys tampons at midnight..."

"Hahaha! Ok sure, no problem. We'll buy one for me and your mom." I said.

"Sweet! Let's go! My treat!" I just laughed at his relieved expression.

Blake paid for two and the cashier seems fine with it.

"Thank you for coming! Come again!" she said as we went out of the store.

We just walked in silence and enjoying the company of each other. And then a gust of wind hit us and it sent me shivers. I was just wearing an over-sized shirt and sweat pants. I didn't pay much attention as to what I was wearing when I went out.

"You cold?" Blake suddenly asked. I just nodded and then he wrapped his arm around me as we continued to walk.

Blake suddenly stopped walking when we reached a nearby playground to our houses.

"Are you already sleepy?" Blake asked me.

"Not really. When I started to walking out of my bed, sleep evaded me already. And I don't think I would also be able to go back to sleep any minute now. Why?"

"Can we spend a few minutes here and may be I could tell you a bit of a story from my childhood? I don't know, every time I pass this playground, memories come to my head and well, I just wanted to share it to you since we're friends now..." he asked me smiling lightly.

"Sure, no problem! I'm your friend. You can tell it to me and I will listen." I said happily and he led me to sit by a bench.

"Ok here it goes. This may seem a bit cheesy, but well, this is what you can call 'puppy love' when I was seven." he started.

"Hey, wait!" I sat-up straight when I remembered something, "Is this about the girl you love whom you've waited for 10 years now yet you don't know her name neither she knows yours? No offence, if you find that offensive." I tend to get hyper sometimes.

"Haha! None taken. And you still remember that?" he asked smiling lightly.

"Yeah, we're like at the same place and position when we talked about that before." How could I not remember that when I was too eager to know who that girl Blake loves?

"Oh yeah, we're also here back then." Then he looked around and turned back to me, "Anyway, yes you're right. I fell for a girl whom I don't know the name of and neither has she known mine. Well, that's puppy love."

"So how did you fall for her then?" I asked wanting to know my competition. Competition? Wow, I'm thinking so beyond the lines.

"Remember when I told you about my chocolate ice cream with sprinkles which fell on the floor and the girl who gave me her vanilla ice cream?" he asked me and I nodded not wanting to interrupt, "Yeah, well you could say that that instant, when she gave me her vanilla ice cream while smiling, I already liked her. Everyday, I would wait for her here to pass by with her mom and then we would wave at each other. She's so beautiful like her mom.

"And then one time, when she was passing by, she didn't notice that there was a car coming and was about to hit her, but I managed to get on the way and save her. She was so scared and cried while I just comforted and hugged her." Why am I feeling this feeling of déjà vu?

"When she had composed herself, she looked at me and smiled. She said, 'Thank you for saving me.'" Blake said this with sparkling eyes. "And that was the moment when I fell for her. She then gave me a

bracelet as a sign of her gratitude may be. It has a plate with words engraved with: Guardian Angel S.H.P." Then he took it out and gave me.

"S.H.P.?" I asked surprised and the feeling of déjà vu is very strong as I glide my fingers across the engraved words.

"Yeah, that must be her initials." he paused and continued, "Oh yeah! That bracelet was the one you had before when we were fighting. We were back in Mrs. Anderson's office back then."

It then hit me like lightning. I am vanilla ice cream girl, I am S.H.P.: Sydney Henrich Parker and I am my competition. Blake liked me, no, he loved me back then!!!

"And we also have a picture taken together before. Here, take a look." Then he showed me a picture from his wallet. It was me and Blake when we were seven eating ice cream together. Vanilla flavor.

"Blake, I think I know who S.H.P. is..." I said slowly.

"Really?! Who?" he asked excitedly.

"It's m-..."

Chapter 22

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 22

Brontophobia. According to phobialist.com, Brontophobia is the fear of thunder and lightning. And I am Brontophobic. You guys all know how my mom died and I saw all of it with my own two eyes that's why I somehow developed this kind of phobia. When I hear thunder or lightning, I start to freak out so bad. And when I was a kid, I used to like playing in the rain, but after my mom died, I started to just stare at the rain through the window and unconsciously cry.

"Blake, I think I know who S.H.P. is..." I said slowly.

"Really?! Who?" he asked excitedly.

"It's m-..."

From the corner of my eye, I saw a flash of lightning broke through the moonless night and then followed by a very loud thunder.

BOOM!!! BOOM!!! BOOM!!!

"Aaaahhhh!!" I shrieked out so loud when another loud thunder followed the last one and then the rain started to pour down so hard.

"Hurry! Come with me!" Blake said as he pulled my hand toward the slide. We hid under the slide to stay dry but we're already wet the moment we reached it, but whatever.

I started to shake so bad and cry uncontrollably when the continuous set of lightning and thunder erupted as the images of my mom dying started to cross my mind.

"Syd," Blake called me but I didn't respond, "Syd, Sydney!" He then wrapped his arms around me as tears rolled down my eyes like the rain pouring down so hard. "It's okay. The rain will soon stop and then we could both go home."

"My mom died with a storm as strong as this." I said.

"Shh... It's gonna be alright. I'm here you know. Nothing will happen to you." Blake said as he just hugged me until I stopped crying when the rain stopped pouring.

Minutes passed and we just stayed silent that I almost fell asleep if Blake didn't break the silence.

"You still awake?" Blake asked.

"Uhmm, yeah," then I sat up properly, "Sorry for seeing me breaking down like that. It's just, you know, I am Brontophobic and I fear thunder and lightning and-"

"You don't have to explain yourself. I know and I understand." Blake said smiling understandingly as he put his hand on my face and slowly leaned down as he kissed me softly but full of passion and love.

—

Minutes passed after we stopped kissing and just held onto each other and enjoying each other's company.

"Hey." Blake said and you could hear him smiling.

"Hey too." I said smiling.

"The rain somehow stopped for now and we can get going. The rain could come back any moment now since the wind is still so strong going to the east and, oh man! I sounded like a weather forecaster." Blake said while scratching the back of his head. He looked so cute doing that. I just laughed at him. "Haha, well, so let's go?" he asked cutely.

"Sure!" I said then we're off to our houses.

Blake and I are now walking home hand-in-hand in comfortable silence. We don't have to say anything to each other but we both know that the both of us are happy and we can feel it.

Nothing could bring my blissful mood down even if I can see Justin standing on our front porch. Wait, what? Rewind please?

Justin Clark? Standing on our front porch? What the hell?

Chapter 23

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 23

What the hell is Justin doing here?

"Hey Syd!" he greeted me happily but somehow composed himself as he saw me hand-in-hand with Blake.

"What the hell are you doing here Justin?" Blake said angrily as he stepped forward and in front of me in a position that he's somewhat protecting me from Justin's 'attack'.

"Am I talking to you Blake? Didn't you hear that I said 'Hey Syd!' and not 'Hey Blake or Syd and Blake'?" Justin replied cockily.

"What the hell do you want Justin?" I then asked stepping forward.

"Syd, baby-"

"Ew. Please! Don't call me like that! It sends shivers down my spine because of disgust!"

"Oh baby-" he started but I sent him a very deathful glare, "Sydney, please, I just wanted to tell you that I still love you and I want you to be my girlfriend again and-"

"WHAT THE F*CK!!" Blake said as he stepped toward Justin and punched him square on the face. Justin fell down and Blake started to punch the crap out of Justin.

"HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT YOU STILL LOVE SYD AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE TO HER AND ASK HER TO BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND EVEN THOUGH YOU KNOW THAT ME, HER BOYFRIEND, IS JUST RIGHT BESIDE HER? DO YOU REALLY WANNA DIE?" Blake said full of fury in his eyes.

"BLAKE, STOP!!!" I shouted but of course it had no effect. It just became worse since the rain started to

pour down again. "BLAKE COLLINS, COULD YOU PLEASE STOP PUNCHING JUSTIN OR I AM GOING TO BREAK UP WITH YOU!!" Well, my mind was not functioning very well, and I didn't to know what to say, so I just let my mouth to do all the work and not my mind if that's even possible.

Well, my mouth somehow outsmarted my mind since Blake stopped and got up from Justin without looking at anything but Justin. When I stepped in front of Justin to help him to stand up, Blake protested but I sent him a look saying that 'this is my business and I know what to do so please stay out' so he did.

I helped the bleeding Justin to stand up and he said, "Oh Syd, baby, I know you can't resist me. I know you still love me and you were just toying that bastard Blake-" It's not my fault that every person in this world has their limits of patience and moments of outburst when that limit was met so beyond the line. Yeah, I freakin' punched Justin's nose so hard that I heard some cracking sound and that I also hurt my hand but it really felt oh-so good!

Justin fell on the floor once again, Blake staring out me with eyes like, O.O, and me, standing while looking so smug yet so furious with all of us now drenched in the rain.

"How in the world did it come across your small mind that I was toying with Blake and that I still love you, huh?! If I am not mistaken, I never did love you and YOU were the one who was TOYING with ME for 30 freakin bucks!!!" I shouted at Justin.

"H-huh? What are you talking about?" he tried to look innocent but he just ended up looking dumb.

"Do you really think that I am that naïve? I know everything now Justin! You just asked me to be your girlfriend since you and your dumb friends asked you to-"

"They didn't ask, they dared me. Oh crap!" Justin said as he clamped his hand to his mouth.

"See? What would happen to you if you were a true criminal being interrogated by a police? You would just correct them with the sequence of events that would somehow reveal that you are the real culprit?

You are so dumb Justin, you like just admitted it," I smirked, "Your friends dared you to ask me out for 30 bucks if you succeeded. I also know that you're already done toying with Stacey."

"W-what? How did you know?" then he shot Blake a very deathful glare as he went forward to attack him but he stumbled down as Blake easily evaded his stack. "Sydney, don't believe everything that he told you. Yes, I admit, I did that for a dare but I fell for you instantly that's why I broke up with Stacey."

"Sydney, don't listen to him! Believe me! He broke up with Stacey because he's now hitting on Samantha Reynolds and she asked him to get your virginity for him to be able to have sex with Samantha!" Blake said.

"How dare you-" Justin said as he once again tried to attack Blake but I just kicked him to stop him. I am so confused! Samantha Reynolds wanted Justin to do what to me? How did Blake know all of this? I barely know Samantha Reynolds yet her name was somehow dragged into the situation! How did Blake know about this?!!

"How the hell did you know about this Blake?" Justin asked my supposed to be question.

"Ha! Well, Samantha Reynolds really wanted me and not you! She thought that I liked Syd because of her innocence, pureness and virginity. She's so jealous of Syd that's why she somehow developed this 'hatred' for her and she told me this plan of hers so long ago to me. She said she would not let Syd win me so she would do anything just to get me but I didn't give a damn! So that sucks for you man!" Blake said smirking.

Justin, who is now bleeding so bad and so pissed, just stood up and give Blake the 'finger' and walk away as the rain continue pouring.

"Hey Syd, you alright?" Blake said as he put his hand on my arm.

"Don't you dare touch me!" I shouted as I took his hand away. I am so confused with what Blake has mentioned awhile ago that I couldn't think properly. Blake knew all along about this Samantha Reynolds and her plan to get me and more over, let Justin take my precious v-card away from me just for her to

have this sort of 'revenge' and get Blake away from me? What the hell? Why didn't Blake tell me about this long before if he already knew about this plan long ago?

"Syd? What's wrong? Are you hurt or-" Blake asked concerned but I cut him off.

"Shut the hell up Blake!" I said as I sent him a death glare.

"Sydney, what's wrong? What did I do?" Blake asked more concerned and confused.

"You wanna know what's wrong? What's wrong is that you did nothing! You did nothing to tell me about this Samantha Reynolds and her plan against me! You knew all along about this plan of hers yet you didn't tell me! You should've warned me about this so that I know that there's someone out there waiting for my downfall!" I shouted over as tears stream down my face along with the rain.

"Syd, I'm really sorry that I didn't tell you but I didn't want you to be scared-" Blake said looking somewhat

really sorry, but who cares? I'm mad so I didn't notice.

"You didn't want me to be scared? Yeah right. I'd be more scared not knowing that my ex-boyfriend is planning something to me for some girl who's mad at me for being your 'girlfriend'! What if you weren't here with me and that Justin would just rape me here or something huh?

You know what? In the first place, I really didn't think that this idea of us pretending to be boyfriend girlfriend would really work out. At first, I thought I was wrong, but no. I was really right. I shouldn't have agreed to this faux relationship in the first place. It was a mistake that I would regret for a long time. I know that in every mistake there are consequences we should face and that consequence that I should face is that I'm already falling in love with you. No, not falling, because I already love you Blake."

"Sydney, I'm really sorry-"

"Don't be sorry, it's my mistake, my consequence. I know you don't feel the same and it's alright. You don't have to be sorry. I don't need your pity."

"But Syd, I also love you." Blake said.

I laughed bitterly but full of pity for myself, "Are you that dumb Blake, can't you see that with me saying those words awhile ago means that I'm already ending this faux relationship of ours? That means you don't have to pretend anymore Blake. It's over."

Blake stood there not knowing what to say. I, then, suddenly felt so tired, more tired than after answering a trigonometric quiz after playing basketball for three hours, that I could just fall any moment now. I have to get inside our house now to rest. The rain is still continuing to pour but nobody could seem to notice and care.

"Goodbye Blake."

And the night ended with the most important thing that I was supposed to say was already forgotten but the feeling that I'm feeling for Blake still remains in my heart.

Chapter 24

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 24

AN: Hey guys! What's up?! I'm really sorry for another late post... I just had to do a lot of things in school which made me really busy and barely open my computer... But anyways, the new chapter is here now!.. Please message me about what you think about it and please don't forget to vote!... thank you!.. ;D

—

WEATHER FORECAST: San Francisco would be experiencing heavy rain today for there is a low pressure area forming. Everyone is expected to be ready with umbrellas and coats since the rain would

continue for the next few days to come... blah blah blah... CLICK!

I just turned off the TV in the living room as I ate my breakfast before going to school. I really don't get it why the weather forecasts are so late. I mean, there has already been a very heavy rain last night yet they would just inform the people now. Well, we can't blame them so whatever. There are more important things that I should put my attention to than the weather...

Like my eyes. My eyes are so puffy, red and swollen. Why? Oh come on dude. You sure you want me to answer that? *sighs* Well, I cried the whole night. There are so many things that are bugging my mind from the things that happened last night. With Justin coming here to Blake saying Samantha has an evil plan against me to me saying confessing my feelings for Blake to Blake saying 'I love you too' out of pity. Pity. That's what I thought it is. He couldn't possibly mean what he said.

I really don't know what to do when I go to school and face him. I actually don't think that I would still

be able to face him after last night that's why I would just probably hide or evade him as much as I can. Yup, evade is the word.

"Syd, hurry up! You're gonna be late for school!" my dad called as he get in the car ready to bring me to school.

"Coming!" I yelled as I took one last gulp of water as I swallowed my vitamin C for body resistance. Body resistance. That's what I needed to get on with this day. Well, good luck to me.

—

"OH MY GOSH!! SYDNEY PARKER, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EYES?!! DID YOU CRY?!" Jean shrieked as she saw me.

"DID BLAKE MAKE YOU CRY?" Jack then turned his brother mode on.

How did they know when I still haven't said a word to them? I can't tell them that I cried the whole night because of Blake and the things that happened last night. I can't tell them...

"Oh! My eyes?" I laughed bitterly as I think of something to say, "My eyes were bitten by two red ants!"

"What?" Jack asked surprised.

"Uh, yeah. I placed cucumber on my eyes last night and then I fell asleep and forgot that the cucumbers were pickled so the ants were enticed by the cucumbers then they bit me." I said. Wow, how stupid did I make myself?

"Are you freakin serious? Sydney, are you sick? I don't think I could imagine you in that situation. It's just so..." Jean trailed off with the lack of word.

"Stupid." Jack filled in.

"Right. Stupid. That act was so stupid that I couldn't imagine you in that picture."

"Oh come on guys. Everyone has their own stupid moments in life, you know? And then the cucumber incident is one of my stupid moments," I just laughed and waved it off, "and hey, have you heard that Ms. Scott is getting married?"

"Really?!!" both of them said at the same time.

"Yeah and they said her fiancé looks like Johnny Depp!"

And we talked about Ms. Scott's upcoming marriage which I heard from the other teachers' gossips as I passed the hallway one time. Yeah, teachers gossip too and it was really hilarious to listen to them gush over on how gorgeous a man is. And my issue about my eyes and Blake was already forgotten. For now.

—

The whole day was torture. I've been trying my very best to ignore Blake but I can't. During first period, our seats may be far from each other but from our seats, he could catch my attention and stare my way. I really felt uncomfortable as I felt his stare on me the whole time we're inside that classroom. I can't glance his way or else I would not be able to come back to reality, ok that was an exaggeration but you know, there's this something that when Blake really stares at you at its full blast, he could like hypnotize you and just let you drown in his eyes and forget everything in the world. No kidding.

The bell finally rang and I could see from my peripheral vision that he's already coming my way but I was already out the room when he got the chance to be in my 5 ft radius. I ran outside and went straight to my locker and put my other stuff and get the things that I needed when I heard my name being called by him not very far from me.

I, then, ducked and crawled to my next class. Yes, as pathetic as it may seem, I crawled. What can I do? I still can't face Blake and I'm really desperate.

—

Lunch...

"And then Stacey fell on the stairs with her face planted on the floor!" Jack said as we ate our lunch.

"That was hilarious. You should've seen it Syd! Syd?" Jean said as she laughed.

I wasn't really paying attention, "H-huh? What?"

"You should've seen Stacey fall," Jean said as she recovered from her laughter, "Oh come on Syd,

what's wrong? You're not normally like this. What happened? Is it because of Blake?"

My head turned to her in a flash, but I didn't say anything.

"Oh come on now Sydney, I'm you're friend and I know you too well. I know that something's up between you and Blake..."

I just nodded and knew that I really couldn't hide it anymore, "How did you know?"

"Well first, I haven't seen you guys together all day when almost all the time he's with you since you've been together. Secondly, he asked me to give you this...." Then she gave me a letter from Blake. "I didn't open it, don't worry."

I took the letter and it read:

"I know I've acted like a jerk to you last night and I really am sorry about it. I'm really sorry if I hurt you r feelings but everything that I've said to you last night is true. You might not be able to forgive me right away and don't want to see me but I need to see and talk to you and tell you what I feel. Please meet

me at your locker later after class. I would be waiting...

-Blake"

I haven't noticed but my tears were falling down uncontrollably. What would I do? Should I go?

Jean suddenly hugged me, "Don't cry. Everything is gonna be okay. He's just a boy that you shouldn't cry about. Shh..."

"Do you want me to kill him?" Jack said venomously.

"NO!" my head snapped up, "Please, don't hurt him. We just had a little misunderstanding. Don't hurt him..." I whispered.

"Jack, be subtle. Sydney, we are your friends and we understand if you don't want to talk about it now but always remember that we are here for you okay?"

I nodded and gave them a small smile, "Thanks guys. I'm really lucky to have friends like you."

"Aww... I'll join in the hug." Jack said and the three of us hugged.

—

Rrrriiiinnnnnggggg!!!

Finally the last bell for the day already rang. Everything that happened today passed by in a blur and I didn't quite remember much of it. I haven't seen Blake since this morning but I have decided to go see him later since I don't have any choice because I would have to go to my locker to grab my stuff before going home and to also patch things up between us. I don't know what is real now and I don't care how things would end between us. All I wanted was to get all things clear.

There would be a football game at the field at 4:00 pm that's why all the students went there straight after class to get a good seat which made the hallways clear.

My heart was beating so fast because I really don't know how to react if I'm already facing Blake. I'm really nervous as I take each step towards my locker, towards Blake.

The hallway was quiet except for some sounds... Shuffling of the feet, heavy breathing of a boy and moaning of a girl...

And the boy happened to be Blake and the girl happened to be Samantha. And they were intensely making out on my locker with Samantha leaning on it while Blake had his hands on the sides of her head on MY locker. My locker, the place where he said he wanted to see and talk to me and tell me what he really feels, which happened to be this. His feelings towards Samantha.

And I left with tears running down from my eyes like the rain pouring outside.

Chapter 25

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 25

Chapter 25 (EDITED)

Blake's POV

Patience is a virtue. My mom always told me that since I was a kid that's why I'm still here waiting for Sydney to show up by her locker even though I have been waiting here for almost 3 hours now... I'll just have to wait...

What if she really doesn't want to meet up with me and purposely left me here?

Nah. She's not like that. If she doesn't want to meet up with me, she should've at least written a note or

something telling me to just go and not wait for her. She's not the type who would leave a person behind waiting for nothing.

With these past few days, I know that I screwed up big time. The incident with Justin the other night was a disaster for me and my relationship with Sydney. I know that I should've told her about Samantha but I don't want her to worry about it since I know that I could protect her and handle Samantha by myself. I thought by hiding it from her would lessen her worries in life and would make our relationship flow smoothly, but I was very wrong. I instantly regretted the moment when I mentioned the thing about Samantha. It's just that I can't help boast about it in front of Justin since he likes Samantha and that Samantha likes me, not that I like her too. Hell, I have an extreme disliking of Samantha, you know. I just wanna see Justin's reaction about it and that was my biggest mistake. I should've just kept my mouth shut.

Things happened so quick that I didn't have much of an idea about what was happening until all the confessions were said. When Sydney told me that she

loves me, I felt like everything has stopped. The girl that I love loves me back and she's angry at me now because I hurt her feelings. Way to go, Blake. Clap. Clap. Not. I don't know what to say seeing Sydney fuming with anger as tears rolled down her face when she told me that she loves me. I was stunned and in shock. When I told her that I love her too, she just laughed and thought that I was just pitying her and was still pretending since Justin was still within the vicinity, but hell NO! I was telling the truth! She should know that I'm not pitying her and not pretending anymore since I really love her!

I tried talking to her but she would just evade me. Every attempt that I did to make her talk to me failed. Heck, I even saw her crawl just to get away from me. And I know that by meeting up by her locker would be my only chance to talk to her yet she was nowhere to be found after 3 hours...

Maybe she already went here and saw... Oh God, please no...

Three hours ago...

What if Syd would not show up? What would I do? But if she does show up, what would I tell her first? These are the things that are clouding up my mind as I wait by her locker exactly when the bell rang. There would be a football game at the field later so the students went there right away after putting their things in their lockers to get a good seat which made the hallways clear and people-free.

As I thought about the hallway as people-free, it doesn't mean that it's bitch-free as well. While waiting by Syd's locker, the bitch *cough*, I mean Samantha came strutting towards me with a huge smirk on her face.

"Hey there, hot stuff..." she said as she reached me and trailed her pointed finger on my chest. Ew. Hot stuff? And geez, her nails are so long that that I wanted to say, 'You know I have nail cutter in my locker. It's not really that dangerous of a tool to use.' But of course I kept it to myself.

I took a step back as I glared daggers at her and icily said, "What the hell are you doing here?"

"Aw, is it that bad for me to visit my baby?" she said.

"Your what? Baby? Oh please, give me a break. I'm not your baby and how in the world did you know that I'm here?" I asked angrily.

"Well, I saw you going here so I followed you. You know, for us to have our private moment together..." Stalker. That's really freaky.

"Samantha," I sighed, I'm so tired of this, "How many times do I have to tell you that I'm not interested in you and that I love someone else. What do I have to do so that you'll just leave me alone?"

"Go out with me," she replied simply.

I know what she's doing. She's trying to get revenge to my new friend, Daniel, who told everything to me about his relationship with Samantha and I really felt bad for the both of them.

I sighed and said, "Stop it. I know what you're doing and it's all because of Daniel." And then she was shocked upon hearing her childhood friend's name. "He told me everything while we're doing the project that we're paired up to do. He then confided everything to me about him and you and your past. I

know that you're just doing this because you want him to feel what you felt when he broke-up with you by going from one guy to another. But Samantha, this has to stop because you're not only hurting him... You're also hurting yourself and other people like me... and Sydney..."

"That's bull shit! I like you!" then she just pulled me towards her and her back against the locker and kissed me hard. I was shocked and taken aback that I almost lost my balance that I put my hands to the sides of her head to steady me. After 20 seconds and that I already recovered from my shock, I then pulled away.

"See? There was no spark. There was none because you like or should I say love someone else..." I said as she just bowed her head in defeat, "I know and can still see that you still have feelings for him. Answer me honestly, do you still love Daniel?"

There was a short pause as tears started streaming down her face, "Yes... But I don't think he still loves me and I'm going to New York tomorrow and I still haven't talked to him..."

And then I faintly heard Daniel's voice inside the lab. With Samantha's departure for New York tomorrow, this might be their last chance to make-up so I made-up a plan right at that moment. "Hey, I know that Daniel still has feelings for you that's why don't get mad at me for what I'm going to say to you because it's just a mere ploy to get you talk to each other..."

She just looked at me confusedly as I pulled her towards the lab which is not so far from Syd's locker.

"Just go with the flow. And sorry in advance." I said to her and saw out of the corner of my eye that Daniel's already preparing to come out of the lab so I then performed my award-winning acting skills, "You're such a fuckin' bitch, bitch. You're nothing but a useless tramp making my life so horrible! I wish you just go to hell and burn-"

I wasn't able to finish my last sentence because Daniel's fist then made contact to my mouth making it bleed a bit.

"DON'T YOU EVER DARE SAY THOSE WORDS TO HER IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO PUNCH YOUR FACE AGAIN!!!" Daniel shouted furiously at me. I just

shrugged and winked at Samantha and went back to Syd's locker.

I guess my acting skills are really that great because Daniel was really mad at me and punched me and busted my lip. Well, at least I made some effort to bring them back together.

Back to the present time...

I saw Daniel kissing Samantha awhile ago and I felt myself smile. I hope that Syd and I would also be able to patch things up like them and be able to be together again. *sighs*

"Hey kid! You're not allowed to stay here anymore. It's already late. You better go home now." The guard told me as he's doing his rounds in inspecting the school. I didn't notice that as I waited for Syd to come while sitting on the floor with my back on the lockers, my mind wandered off and that the sun has already set outside.

Without any word, I stood up and left the school grounds feeling so down and depressed.

Patience is a really good trait to have and waiting for something or someone worth waiting for is good. It just turns bad when you know that that something or someone that you are waiting for will never really come.

Sydney didn't come.

Chapter 26

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 26

Blake's POV

I'm just a man who makes mistakes and screws up things. But this time, as I went home defeated, I knew that I screwed up BIG TIME. I've never felt so sad before until now. I guess there's really a first for everything. Sydney didn't show up and I waited for her until the sun started to set.

So many things were running inside my head as to why she didn't show up and one of these is that maybe she saw me and Samantha... Shit! I shouldn't have agreed to kiss her in the first place! What was I thinking? We were on here locker for crying out

loud! What if she went but saw me and Samantha? Crap! My life sucks!

"Blake, can you give this apple pie to Sydney? I promised to give her when I made one." My mom said as she cooked our dinner.

"Sure!" I said. This could be my time to talk to her. I suddenly felt nervous.

It was raining outside that's why I got one umbrella as I took off. I sometimes like the rain, but today, not so much since it's kind of matching my sad mood and I'm not so cool with that.

Ding Dong!

I rang the doorbell once and after a few seconds, Syd's dad opened the door.

"Hey Blake! What's up?" he greeted me with a smile. Oh, probably didn't know about me and Syd. I guess that's good.

"Hi sir! Uhm, is Sydney there? My mom made her an apple pie..." I said as I raised the pie.

"Oh a pie for Syd! She'll surely love that but she's not yet here because there's this science project that she has to do and finish at the lab, but you can come and wait for her inside." He said as he opened the door wider for me to enter.

I mumbled thanks as I gave the pie to him. He said I could sit anywhere and feel at home as he excused himself to go to his computer to finish some report. I just nodded as my mind is off to somewhere.

Sydney is not home yet. Where could she have been? I could not remember having any science project that is due anytime soon? Besides, the lab is supposed to be closed by now since the guard already shooed me away off the school grounds. If she's not there and not in here, then where is she?

As I had this question in mind, something caught my eye by the wall of their living room. I went to it to have a closer look of the big framed picture. There are three people in it, a younger version of Mr. Parker, a woman and a little girl. The three of them are having these smiles saying that nothing can put their happy mood down. They all look so happy and

contented. The woman and the girl look very familiar and both have these green eyes, the green eyes which you could be lost in...

"We took that picture 10 years ago. When my wife was still alive and Syd was still 7. We were so happy back then even though we lived a very simple life. Her mom grew up in a rich family but was married to a middle-class man like me and she never complained. I thought that everything was perfect then until the accident which caused her death. I felt my world shattered into pieces when she died but I still have to hang on since Sydney would be depending on me. She already lost her mom and I don't want her to lose her dad as well that's why we moved to Florida where I grew up to have a fresh start. We came back here to have her mom's last wish for her to finish her high school in the school she used to love..." Mr. Parker said this as his eyes were full of emotions and you can tell that his presence may be here but his mind is back to ten years ago.

"Mr. Parker, I think I have to go find Sydney now... I have to tell her everything..." I said as my eyes still on the picture and mind solely on one person.

"Do what you have to do. I know you can do it Blake." He said as he patted my back.

I then stormed out of the house not caring that it's raining outside and leaving my umbrella behind. My mind was already putting all the pieces together. The bracelet and the green eyes belongs to Sydney, the girl that I loved before and still love now. And she's angry at me because I hurt her feelings.

I have to find her and really have to explain things and make everything clear. Where could she possibly be? The lab? No. Jean's house? I guess not because she could've just said to her father that she's there. Where could she be? I can't think of any place that she could go to knowing that it's raining this hard.

I just let my foot bring me anywhere to find her until I found myself at the park. She's there, by the swings, sitting alone not caring of the rain.

I steadied myself as I approached her, "Sydney..."

She jumped in surprise as she turned to face me. Even though with the rain drops on her face, I know that the rain is not the only reason why her face is wet. It's also composed of tears as I saw her puffy red eyes.

"What are you doing here?" she somehow whispered but I heard it.

"I now know who S.H.P. is..." I said as I offered her a smile.

She was surprised, I can see it in her eyes, but she just bowed her head down as she said, "How...?"

"I went to your house and saw your picture with your mom and dad. And that's when everything clicked inside my head. I'm really dumb to not notice it before..." She still has her head down as I stared at her, "That the girl that I've been waiting for to come has already been there right before my eyes. That the girl that I love ten years ago is also and still the girl that I love after ten years..."

She then turned her head to me with a blank expression on her face as I continued to gaze at her sad eyes and sincerely said, "Sydney, I love you."

She just stared at me as silence filled the air. And then she stood up still expressionless and did the thing I least expected her to do, she slapped me.

She then laughed bitterly and angrily said, "Stop lying Blake! I'm already tired of all your lies! How could you say that you love me when I saw you kissing Samantha on my locker like there would be no tomorrow huh?"

"Y-you saw-" I was cut off since I was too stunned. She really went to see me but she saw it...

"Why, you thought I didn't see that? Well unfortunately, yeah, I saw it. Well, isn't that what you wanted me to see and know? How you love Samantha? And I really think that you love her so much by just seeing how passionate you make-out on MY locker!" she yelled.

"Sydney, it's not what you think it is!" I defended.

"Oh yeah? Well, it does look like it! You know what? I'm so tired already of all this crap," she then took a deep breath and sighed, "Please Blake, leave me alone..."

I just nodded as she left. Just when I thought that with kissing Samantha, she would just leave me and Syd alone but I was wrong... A more complicated situation came that would come in between me and Sydney, but I would not let that get to me because I would not give up. I know that regrets really come after we've already done something that we thought which would be best for us, but there is already nothing that we can do to change what has already been done.

I'm a man but I also have feelings to be hurt. I haven't encountered this thing for a long while but it just came. I was there standing alone without knowing that not only the rain caused my face to be drenched but also caused by this thing called tears.

A/N: Hiya! What's up guys? I was just wondering.. what happened to wattpad? when did it change? I was surprised when I went to this site after 2 weeks

of not visiting it... and then awhile ago, I was like.. "Am I in the right website?".. hehe.. I guess many things could really happen in just 2 weeks.. oh well.. that's life.. it needs change, and the change for good... wow, I'm kind of being philosophical here.. ;p anyway.. here's the next chap and I hope you'd like this one!... please comment and vote!.. thank you!... ;D

Chapter 27

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 27

A/N: Hey there! I'm so sorry guys if my previous chapters have been full of all those drama. It's just that the story really has to undergo that stage. I know that some of you were somehow annoyed with it especially with Blake and him being an idiot. It's just that Blake didn't think things first before doing something which was his mistake and acts on impulse and not using his brain properly that's why he ended up being a complete idiot. But don't worry guys, this chapter is already over that depressing moments and is now contained of some humor focused now on Syd. We would give Blake a rest for this chapter and I hope you'd like this one! Please

vote and tell me what you thought about it and to our two new crazy characters who would be introduced later on. I hope you'll still continue supporting this story till the end... well, I guess that's all... Onto the story!... ;D

—

Ignoring Blake was easier than I thought, but I think maybe it's because he's also doing his part of the bargain of giving me some space and I'd like to thank him for that which I'm pretty sure I would never do.

Days to turn to weeks which then turned months and I could probably say that everything went back to normal as it was before, but I knew something deep inside me was still aching from the past which didn't have a proper and good closure. Nonetheless, I'm still grateful for the peace that I'm having now and I've focused my full attention on my studies which is a very good thing.

People are so hyped up and enthusiastic in their conversations especially the girls since our prom will be in about a month and half from now. I'm not really planning on going because I really think it's

just a waste of time and money. I'm not really the type of girl who likes to go parties and dances since well, I can't dance. I have two right feet, you know. Yes, right feet because two left feet is kind of overused and already meant bad dancing which left the two right feet to be poor dancing. Pathetic, yeah I know.

"It should be fairy tale like! It'd be so romantic with all the princesses and prince charmings coming to the ball in their royal gowns and tuxes and their elegant carriages-" a blondie, which I recall to be Liz who is part of the student council said but was cut off mid-sentence.

"Oh cut the crap Cinderella! Who would be in their right minds come to the prom in carriages?! Are there even carriages at this time and place? And besides, people just love to come to the prom in limos! Especially the black ones and-" the gothic Rachel who is also a part of the student council said but was cut off mid-sentence.

"Black limos? Oh come on! Black limos are like the cars they used in the funeral parlors as they deliver

the coffin to its final destination! Besides, princesses and princes would look authentic if they came from carriages!" Liz huffed.

"Ahem."

"Princesses and princes in carriages? What if one girl decided to dress up like Princess Ariel of the Little Mermaid? Would that look good on coming out of a carriage by crawling in which she would just make herself more of a fool than she already is by coming to the prom with shells covering her chest and a fake tail?" Rachel retorted.

"Ahem."

"Well, if you think you're so good that you're insulting my fairy tale theme, let me hear yours?" Liz asked angrily.

Rachel smirked, "I planned on having a gothic Victorian ball theme where in our theme colors would be black and red which would create a mysterious atmosphere that would cloud up the dance hall. The deep, Victorian era colors and music

would be romantic on so many levels and then the girls could wear dresses like during the time of-"

"Romeo and Juliet? Geez! Who would wear dresses like that? It's so out of fashion!"

"Ahem."

Rachel's eyes widened as if she just saw that the cheeseburger that she ordered doesn't have cheese in it, "And you think that your fairy tale theme is any better? Who in their right minds would wear dresses with so much pink on them that my eyes might bleed, huh?"

"And who in their right minds as well would wear dark and depressing colored dresses to prom, huh?" Liz yelled as they started to lean to each other while glaring, seeming ready to pounce onto the other. I thought that this would really be the right time to boldly cut them since they didn't seem to notice my subtle attempts to cut them by coughing.

"I'm so sorry to break it to you but you two are kind of blocking my way out of this bathroom cubicle. May I tell you that it's not a very pleasant experience

to stand in front of a toilet bowl with two girls arguing and blocking the path of air and the exit. I'm kind of claustrophobic so if you two don't move even a bit to the side, I might faint." I said as calmly as I could.

The two just stared at me dumbfounded but nonetheless stepped aside as I thanked them and washed my hands on the sink. When I was about to get out of the restroom, they blocked the door.

"Yes?" I asked confused.

"Fairy tale or Gothic Victorian?" they both asked at the same time, or should I say shouted.

"Uh-what?" I asked, the slow that I was.

"Fairy tale right? It would be so much fun where you could see every girl wear their beautiful gowns and become princesses and-" Liz was cut off.

"Pssh. Fairy tales are so childish. My sister in 3rd grade just had their Halloween Party Fairy tale themed. And that's why I think Gothic Victorian is the most fantastic idea ever!" Rachel said smugly.

"Oh it's not! Fairy tale is the most brilliant, dazzling, stunning, marvelous-" Liz said.

Rachel then smacked Liz's head, "Shut it! Gothic Victorian!"

Liz's eyes flared as she smacked Rachel but just ended up scratching her face with her dangerously long finger nails that could dig through anything and might put can openers to shame. As a result of Liz's scratch, Rachel's long purple false eyelashes seemed to dangle off but she quickly remedied and put it back. Her false lashes are so long that they could probably balance 1 pencil, 1 ball pen and 6 toothpicks. What's up with the prom committee and their weird body parts?

I love watching girl fights so I didn't do much effort to stop them now since I could move now freely unlike inside the cubicle awhile ago, but unfortunately, they stopped hitting each and faced me.

"What?"

"Fairy tale or Gothic Victorian?! Decide now or you'll be sorry!" they both said at the same time which is really creepy.

I sighed because honestly, I really don't care what our prom theme would be since I'm not going, but they threatened me and since I'm really afraid of Liz's can opener nails and Rachel's pencil holder false eyelashes, I just said, "I think, if you can't decide on either of your choices, why don't you just combine them together?" They stared at me confused so I just continued, "I mean why don't you try to have uh... Masquerade Party?" They were silent as this sudden idea of mine sink in their heads, "With a masquerade party, people could wear any dress they would like black or pink! You could decorate the dance hall like a castle added with some black and silver ornaments to put up a mysterious feel and aura to it since it's a masquerade and everyone is supposed to wear masks which would liven up to its mysterious effect! A fairy tale theme mixed with gothic Victorian! What can you say?" I asked as I, myself, has been mesmerized by what I was picturing in my head.

As I looked at the two girls in front of me, I thought they didn't like my idea since they just stared at me as if I grew two heads when suddenly, they squealed.

"Oh my gosh! That'd be perfect right, Rach!" Liz said.

"Of course!" Rachel agreed and then they did this super weird handshake: hi-five, bump of hips on both sides, snap, clap, pump fists, some head spins or also known as hairography and then shot each other with their hand as guns and then blew the imaginary smoke. And they completed that handshake in a matter of 49.27 seconds. I knew that because I timed them with my digital watch. Wow, and I thought they would end up killing each other awhile ago.

After their mind-blowing handshake, they looked at each other with these weird smiles on their faces then looked at me and then turned their backs facing the door as they whispered something to each other. Why am I having this weird feeling that something bad would happen as if they would throw a bomb to me any second now?

"You're Sydney Parker, right?" Liz then asked after whispering and faced me.

"Yeah." I asked hesitantly, not wanting their mischievous smiles on.

"Well then Sydney, since you're the one who created that very amazing idea for the prom..." Rachel started then faced Liz as they both said, "We are then assigning you to be the head prom committee for this year!" There, they already said it: the bomb.

"Sorry, but I can't-" I was then cut off.

"What was that? You can? Oh my gosh! Sydney, you really are the best!" Liz said as she tackled me in a skin-crashing-hug, skin-crashing I must say because her nails hit my back and it hurts like being stabbed by a 0.25 pointed pen.

"Alright! Now don't worry because Liz and I will be here to assist you as you lead the prom committee!" Rachel said as she pried Liz away from me and I mouthed 'thanks' to her.

"Rachel's right! And since we'll be working together for quite a long while, we would therefore teach you how to do our secret handshake!" Liz then said enthusiastically.

Secret handshake? Oh please, kill me now.

Chapter 28

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 28

"Oh my gosh! I really can't believe it! I'm gonna be going to the prom with Stan! I'm so excited!" a girl two lockers away from me shrieked to her friend.

"Me too! I'm so excited that my two month of dieting would now pay off because I would now be able to wear the size two dress that I bought in France!" her friend replied.

"We really now have to prepare our nails, hair, spa and everything! Aaah! So many things to do! Let's go!" she replied and they walked away still shrieking about the most fabulous event of the year, prom.

Right.*with matching raise of my eyebrow* Oh, geez! Its just prom! What's the difference of it from Homecoming, Winter Formal and Spring Dance? Hmm...? Same people, same food, same activities (e.g. dancing, socializing, etc.)... What's the point? I mean, not that I'm an anti-prom here but it's just that, you would still be doing the same thing just like any other dances, so why fuss about it so much and make a big deal out of it?

Prom would be coming up soon. Soon as in tomorrow and I'm now panicking like a mad woman. Not because I still don't have my appointment with my hair stylist *eye rolls and scoffs*, but because the decorations for the dance hall was still not yet set properly. Yes, I'm part of the prom committee and unfortunately, I'm the head leader. Ironic, I know, but what can I do? After my spur-of-the-moment idea of a masquerade ball after being pressured to choose between two ideas of raging crazy girls, I was then assigned or shall I say threatened to be head leader or else Rachel and Liz would make me do the crazy secret handshake with them every time we see each other. Yes, I miraculously learned or shall I say

mastered the secret handshake and I'm really embarrassed to admit that I know how to perform it and that it just took me 7 minutes to master it.

I now brought my spray paints, cloths, curtains and all the stuff needed for decorating the dance hall from my locker. The prom would be held in our school's dance hall which is really big and beautiful with the stairs that looks like the one in Titanic which Rose came down from with Jack waiting below. The dance hall was perfect for the masquerade ball.

"Sydney, here!" Liz said waving her hands while preparing the other decorations.

"Hey guys! A very long work awaits us so I guess we should get started!" I said as I came near and we started working together.

This whole experience of being in the committee is not really that bad. I have to admit that I really had a good and fun time working with them especially with Liz and Rachel even though they act crazy sometimes. I was able to bond with everyone and Jean and Jack decided to help as well since we're just

9 in the committee, 4 boys and 5 girls. All in all, it was a very fun experience.

Everyone was busy doing their own tasks as I overheard this conversation...

"Hey, I heard Samantha already left for New York and Daniel followed her there." Jane, a member of the committee, said as she spray painted one of the backdrops.

"Daniel? As in Daniel Reid, the Chess Club president?" Lara asked beside her.

"Yes. I heard they were childhood sweethearts but because Samantha's parents didn't approve of him, Daniel was beaten up so he broke up with her and then with Samantha not knowing this, she became broken hearted and angry that's why she went from one boy to another to show Daniel that she can move on without him. But it turns out that they still love each other since a freshman saw them crying and kissing the day before Samantha leaves for New York." Jane explained.

"But what about Blake? I thought Blake and Samantha were-" Lara was cut off by Jane.

"Blake Collins? Oh girl, please. Blake is so not interested with the girl. I heard one of Samantha's friends saying that during the time before Daniel and Samantha made-out, Blake heard this thing between Daniel and Samantha and made a plan to get them back together since Daniel has been his lab partner and they really became close. Blake conjured up a plan and then started telling what a whore Samantha is when Daniel was already within earshot. Samantha was in the plan since Blake confronted her about what she feels about Daniel. And then upon hearing Blake's colorful words to Samantha being a slut, Daniel came to the rescue and punched our 'evil' Blake." Jane said.

"Really? What happened then?" Lara asked.

"And then Blake just walked away while Daniel asked if she was okay and then they had their heart-to-heart talk and then the rest is history. I guess they really are meant for each since Daniel was willing to

follow her to New York to show her parents that he is the one for her." Jane said.

"Aww... That was really sweet! Wait! So you mean Blake was telling those words to Samantha because he wanted Daniel and Samantha to get back together because Daniel was nice to him and became a good friend?" Lara asked.

"Yes. Blake pretended to be the 'villain' so Prince Charming Daniel would come to rescue Princess Samantha," then she paused for a sec and continued, "Besides we all know that he still loves Sydney even though they already broke up. He might not admit it, but you can see it with the way he looks and sneak glances at her. I even heard that there are many girls throwing themselves at him but he refused." Jane said.

"Yeah, I can see how he looks at her from afar. It's kind of sad for a guy who made another couple have their happy ending while his was a tragic one because of some misunderstanding."

"That's life. It would never be called life if it is fair." Jane deadpanned as she finished spray painting.

I was on a metal ladder while putting the curtains since all the boys are out carrying the tables and chairs to their respective places when I heard this conversation below me. Are the things that they said are true? The things about Daniel and Samantha? About Blake helping Samantha and Daniel together? They might be true since the day when Samantha left, Daniel dropped out and Blake has a busted lip.

All these newfound knowledge is giving me a headache and making me dizzy. I was barely able to eat my lunch awhile ago since I was finishing the things to be done for prom and I was so tired. I suddenly lost my balance and fell off the ladder while hitting my head on the hard-tiled floor. And then everything went black.

—

My head felt like a combination of a cat barking and a bird rapping. How that was possible, I don't know but I felt like my head was spinning 137 mph. I slowly opened my eyes to see long purple eyelashes.

"Aaahh!" I screamed in surprise as I sat up and then the pounding in my head doubled.

"Oh my dear. Am I really that scary?" Rachel frowned.

Liz laughed and said, "At least she woke up with a start because of your lashes," then she turned to me, "How are you feeling?"

"I'm okay," I said then remembered that the curtains I was putting up was brought down by me as I clutched unto it as I fell which caused all the other curtains and backdrops to fall as well, "Let's go finish up the dance hall. I kind of pulled most of the backdrops down along with me. I guess we still have-" then I looked at the clock and my heart stopped. 7:30 pm. "Oh no. How long have I slept?"

"Four hours, but we totally understand it. The school doctor said that it's because of over fatigue and exhaustion. We know you were really working hard in this project that you barely eat lunch anymore and you work up until late at night because you do the arrangements for the catering and stuff along with your load of homework." Rachel said as she gave my hand a squeeze.

"But don't worry, Blake helped us along with his 3 other friends. Everything is already set. We're just waiting for the prom attendees to start the ball, so you don't have to worry." Liz gave me a comforting smile.

"Blake?" I asked confused and surprised.

"Yeah. Blake went in awhile ago because when he passed by, he saw the guys having a hard time carrying the tables and chairs so he helped them and then when you fell down, he rushed over to you and brought you here in the clinic." Rachel said.

"So you mean Blake was the one who carried me in here?" I asked and don't know what to think or feel.

"Yeah. He was panicking so much that I have to smack his head to calm him down when he brought you here unconscious." Liz recalled

"If you just saw his face, it's kind of heart breaking. You can say that he really cares about you, Syd." Rachel said as she squeezed my hand again and smiled a little.

Blake carried me in here and was worried about me? Why am I suddenly feeling this fluttery feeling in my stomach? At this point, the school doctor came in and did some check-up on me and said I can go home now. Rachel offered to give me a ride home but I said she should proceed to her car already as I check the dance hall and pick up my stuff.

When I entered the dance hall, I was mesmerized. I felt like I was in a magical palace with a mysterious feel to it. Even though I would not be attending the prom, it made me excited for the prom attendees. As I did my final check-ups, I was ready to go and went to pick up my things and stuff them all in my bag and went to Rachel's car and went home.

Little did I know that along with the extra curtains that I stuffed inside my bag, there was a letter that was addressed to me from Blake.

A.N.// Beware for the end is near!! 2 more chapters left.... comment and vote guys! thank you!... ;D

Chapter 29

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 29

IMPORTANT AUTHOR'S NOTE... PLEASE READ...

Yo guys! I just want to say that before you proceed reading this chapter, please go back to chapter 25 because I did some MAJOR editing and that you have to read that first so that you wouldn't get confused in reading this chapter... I edited the part when Samantha went up to Blake by the lockers... So yeah, check that out first... Now please go read CHAPTER 25!!! This is already the second to the last chap and the next one's going to be the long GRAND FINALE!! I just want to tell you that there would be no sequel because the ending that I'm going to give to this story would already be some kind of a happily ever after...

But on the other hand, I'm planning on creating a new one after this but I really don't know what yet because I have three rough ideas in my head and I don't know what to choose... One has a strong, brave and a spy heroine, another has a tomboyish heroine and the other has a heroine who's afraid to fall in love again because she was dumped in many creative ways... For more info please go to this link: (http://quizilla.teennick.com/polls/16700849/what-story-should-i-do-next) I made this poll in my quizilla account and I need your help by answering this poll or you could message me of what you think... Please comment and vote!! Thank you!!... :D

—

"WHAT?!! What do you mean you're not going?" Liz shrieked so loud into the phone that made me pull the phone away from my poor ear.

"Yes, Liz. I'm not going to the prom." I replied simply as I yawned and lounged comfortably on the couch. It was already 3 pm and Liz called me if I want them to help me prepare for prom later and said that I wouldn't come. I have forgotten to mention that to

them since I was really busy with all the preparations that's I didn't have the chance to tell this bit of information. Well, I didn't think that she would be so hysterical about it that's why I thought it would be okay, but I was wrong. Very wrong.

"What?! But you were like the head chairman of this magnificent event and worked so hard for it and you would not come?!" she said incredulously.

"Yes, I would not come because I'm not really a partier. I'm not really into social gatherings such as proms and all that. Besides, I already attended the Winter Dance last year so I already have a good memory of a school dance." I said. The Winter Dance. I remember it like it was just yesterday and the night where my life changed. Yeah, it was definitely one of the best nights ever in my life.

Liz snapped me back to reality as she said, well more like shouted, "But Prom is different than any other school dances. You made this Prom possible! You created it Syd! Don't you want to see how the students of Van Allen Academy would see and be amazed by your hard work?"

Wow, that struck a cord. I never really thought about that because I only treated this as a project like a science project, nothing big. I didn't know that the project that I have this time would really have that of an impact to others. Most of the time, during our science project exhibits, only the teachers and the project makers are the ones who attend.

"Liz, maybe you could just take some pictures and videos for me of the prom. By that, I would still be able to see how our schoolmates are enjoying the project that we all worked hard for." I said.

"Are you sure you don't want to come?" Liz said softly.

"Yeah. It's too late now. The Prom would start at 7 and it's already 3 and I still don't have a dress and a mask for that matter. So yeah, just have fun." I replied.

"Okay then but if you need me just call me or Rachel okay?"

"Okay. Bye, have fun! And don't forget the pictures." I said and we both laughed and hung-up.

After the phone call, I suddenly felt a pang of slight sadness. If you're gonna ask me if I would want to come to prom months before, I would definitely answer no, but now... I shook my head to clear my thoughts. It's too late now. I'm not prepared for this event. I don't even have a dress! As I've said earlier, I'm not really a partier no matter what kind of a party it is, formal or informal. Even though I know that Jean, Jack, Liz, Rachel and all the others would be in the Prom with me, I'm not really comfortable. But during the Winter Dance with Blake, I don't know. I guess Blake's presence made me feel safe, comfortable and confident under my own skin...

And then it hit me, after all this time, I realized that I still need Blake back in my life...

—

The wall clock read 7:30 pm and I'm now cleaning my messy room. I took all the dirty clothes to the laundry basket and replaced my bed sheets and pillow cases. I then went to put the curtains down and went to my bag where the extra curtains I have

for the Prom that were not used and decided to just put them in my room.

As I pull them out of the bag, I noticed a piece of folded paper fell to the floor. I grabbed it and it has my name written outside. Curious that I was, I opened it and was shocked that it was a letter from Blake...

It read...

"Dear Sydney,

I know you hate me now and don't want to talk to me but I really need to tell you everything and clear all the things between us. Please don't tear this paper before you finished reading everything because I really have to let you know all of these things and explain... I'm not really a writer so uh... sorry if it sucks but well here I go...

During the time when I asked you to go to your locker to meet me, I was really going to tell you how much I love you... The incident with Samantha... It was all a misunderstanding... Wait! Don't throw this

letter yet! Please let me explain... Okay, here's what really happened...

While I was waiting for you, she came and tried to flirt with me but I just brushed her off because I don't like her! Oh please, it gives me the chills just thinking about her! But anyways, you know Daniel? Daniel Reid? He was my lab partner and then we became really close friends as we do our project and he told me that he and Samantha we're really childhood sweethearts but her Samantha's parents didn't approve of him so they hired goons to beat his ass-up to leave their precious daughter alone. Since he was so afraid and he was just a freshman then, he broke-up with her.

Samantha didn't know that her parents were involved with their break-up that's why she became so angry at Daniel and went from one guy to another to show him that she's not really affected at all but in reality, she was really affected and still loves him and Daniel still loves her. It's just that during those times, I was her 'new target' to make Daniel jealous because I'm his new friend, but I refused that's why she tried

to seduce me by pulling me and kissing me on your locker. I had my hands on the sides of her head on the locker because she really caught me off guard and was about to lose my balance. And that's what you saw. It's really not my fault but I'm really sorry that you have to witness that incident.

And then, I set up a plan to make Samantha and Daniel together by saying harsh words to her while Daniel was within earshot. I guess my acting skills would really win me an Oscar since Daniel was really mad at me and punched and busted lip. Well, I'm really a professional... hahaha! :D And then I heard they were back together and Daniel followed her in New York...

I hope we could be like them... I hope we could get back together... I'm really really sorry for everything and hurting you and I really regret all the things that I've done which caused you pain... You may not want to be together with me again, heck, you might not want to be even friends with me again... But I just want to let you know how sorry I really am and I

hope you could forgive me... All I ask is your forgiveness...

If you feel that you have already forgiven me or a slight bit of forgiveness or at least you think that in the future I still have a chance to be forgiven... Please come to the Prom... I would be waiting... I love you...

Love,

Your EQUAL PARTNER aka Mr. Drop Dead Gorgeous :)"

As I finished reading the letter, I subconsciously found myself crying. I didn't realize that I was crying until I saw a tear drop on the paper.

The girls that I heard talking about yesterday was really true. Blake really loves me and that he was really sorry. He really sounded so sincere and regretful of all the things he has done. As I closed my eyes, I remembered al the things we've been through... How we started as enemies, when he destroyed my science project and how he admitted his mistake to the principal, when he comforted me when Justin cheated and fooled me with Stacey,

during the Winter Formal, all the dates that we had and when I had my breakdown when I missed my mom... He has always been there by my side and I didn't feel like he was just pretending when he was doing all those things. He was sincere every time, always has been and with his apology, he still is.

When I opened my eyes then, I knew I have my answer. Even though I don't have a dress, nothing can stop me in what I'm going to do. I'm going to Prom.

—

I also did some editing on chapter 13 during Blake and Sydney's kiss at the park.. It doesn't really affect the story that much but I just want to let you know that I also did some editing there.. :)

Please don't forget to take the poll!! Thank you!!.. :)

here's the link: http://quizilla.teennick.com/polls/16700849/what-story-should-i-do-next

Chapter 30

It's Not Hard to Pretend to Love You: 30(THE FINALE)

Yo yo yo guys! Sorry for the super late update of the last installment of this story. I'm really really sorry, but heads up because this is the last chapter and it's really long! I hope you would like the ending. Before anything else, I would like to thank the following: God, my family and friends, and of course, you guys, the readers!! Without all of you, this story would not be possible.

I would like to give credit to the following cited works: 1. The Boys Next Door by Jennifer Echols (This was the book which inspired me and gave me the idea to write this story. This story is some kind of like a fanfiction of that book, but I made my own plotline

and character profiles. It's an amazing book!) 2. Moment of Truth by FM Static (the song which Blake first sang) 3. Seventeen Forever by Metro Station (the song which Blake and Syd danced to during the Winter dance), 4. The Last Supper Club (the restaurant where Blake and Syd had their dinner date while spying on Stacey and Justin) 5. Friday the 13th (the horror movie which Syd and Blake watched when Syd was 'babysitting' Blake) 6. 7-11 (where Syd and Blake met at midnight) 7. Collins Dictionary 8. Your Guardian Angel by Red Jumpsuit Apparatus (the song which Blake sang for Syd at the prom)

I think that's all, but if I missed any copyrighted material that you know, I do not own them.

I'd like to thank all the people who voted and commented for this story. Thank you guys! And now, let us proceed to the finale of this story!... Enjoy!... :D

The picture on the right was taken from Google Images... (Sydney's dress) I'm sorry I can't put up her mask and Blake's tux and mask bec. of some technical difficulties with the photobucket slideshow but I'll try...

THE FINALE...

Happy endings - those are the words that we often see when a fairytale ends, but this is not a fairytale, this is real life. There would be no fairy godmother who would give me one elegant dress and make me gorgeous in an instant. There would be no pumpkin which I would ride as I go to the ball in my mentioned elegant dress given by my fairy godmother. And there would be no glass shoe or shoes to be worn and be left as I walked down the stairs. There would be none of such things because this is real life, which means, I'm here standing by our front door preparing to crash the prom aka Masquerade ball and yes, I'll crash the prom in my worn-out jeans and sneakers and a statement shirt that says 'Sorry, I can't stop GRAVITY from making you FALL for me' in which by the way, I won from a Physics Quiz Bee that I joined in 9th grade. Yeah, my outfit for prom is just fabulous. Not. But I don't care since nothing can stop me now.

My dad would not be coming home until 8:15 and it's already 7:45 that's why I just left him a note that I

would be at the prom and would come home not after midnight. I dashed out our house and started to run towards the bus stop if not only for Mrs. Collins suddenly calling out to me.

"Sydney, what are you still doing here? I thought you have your prom tonight?" she asked as she locked her car with grocery bags at hand.

"Yes, but I actually didn't plan on going until now. I'm going to prom even though it's already late because..." and then I started rambling, "Blake-gave-me-a-letter-and-then-I-have-to-go-to-prom-so-that-I-" and then Mrs. Collins laughed and gave me knowing smile.

"I don't understand what you were saying, but I know that you changed your mind and wanted go to prom because you already figured something out, am I right?" She smiled while I just nodded. "Well then, let's g-... Wait! Sorry if I would offend you but, are you really going to prom like that?" she pointed at my hideous statement shirt and jeans and sneakers confusedly and I shamefully nodded my head. She just beamed at me and said, "Don't worry. I think I

might help solve your problem." And then she did when she led me inside their house and into her closet and shuffled for a few minutes and then when she surfaced, she just got an amazing emerald ball gown inside a plastic cover.

I gasped in awe and she said with her eyes far-away, "Well, this was my ball gown for prom when I was your age. That night was one of my most treasured nights since that was when my husband asked me to be his girlfriend," then she looked at me, "And I want to give this to you because I have a feeling that this night would also be one of your most treasured nights in your life. Sydney, you're like my daughter already and I know that you are having some problems with my son, but I know that you two would solve it. I know you would." And then I hugged her and when we pulled back, I put on the dress and she did my hair and make-up.

After Mrs. Collins dolled me up and gave me a mask, I looked at the mirror and was just plainly shocked to see what I saw. Not to boast or anything, but I simply looked fabulous. We don't have much time that's why

after I looked at the mirror, we then dashed to her car and she would drive me to the prom, but well, because fate is north pole and I'm also north pole, we don't attract but we repel. The car won't start because it ran out of gas. It was already 8:20 and the prom is almost halfway through and Blake is waiting for me! Oh goodness, I hope someone would come to my rescue.

As Mrs. Collins was calling cab, my rescuer, came. My dad came home in his car and saw us by Mrs. Collins' car. "Syd, hop in!" Dad smiled and I went in after thanking Mrs. Collins and giving her another hug.

We were off to prom, but as I said, fate and I repel because on our way there, traffic welcomed us because groups of goats and cows were crossing the street. I know, what the hell right? Goats and cows crossing the city streets at night with their shepherds looking ragged because some goats were not following their lead. It was actually funny to watch if not only we're being stuck in traffic while we're supposed to be somewhere. After 8 minutes of waiting, I went out of the car and helped the

shepherds do their job. Yes, I became a shepherd and led the goats and cows to the right path in a ball gown and stiletto high heels. People were staring at me while I held the stick and talked to the goats saying, "Right! Left! There good boy!" Well, I don't care anymore, as long as the animals would listen to me, which they did, and so that I could get out of here.

After the goats and cows were already off the street, I then handled the jumbled cars and became a traffic aid. I raised my hands to my right while I let the cars on my left to go and then vice versa. Soon enough, the flow of the cars became smooth and then I went in our car.

"Wow Syd, I didn't know that you have a future as a shepherd and a traffic enforcer, huh." My dad joked as we accelerated and laughed together at my experience for tonight and my possible jobs in the future.

After a few minutes, we finally came to a stop outside Van Allen Academy's gate to the dance hall.

"Sydney, do what you have to do. I know you can." I kissed my dad's cheek and gave him a hug. I went out of the car and faced the gates. Here I come, Blake Collins.

At the prom...

Woah... That was the word that came to my mind and escaped my lips as I entered the dance hall. No words can describe it. I really can't believe that I was part of the committee who made all of this happen. Rachel was right when she said that I would be missing a big part of my life when I wouldn't attend the event which we all put our hard work on. It was simply amazing.

The mysterious aura was matched by all the people in their elegant ball gowns and masks. All the girls are really pretty and the all the boys are really handsome even though they're behind their masks. You could see in their eyes and smiles that they are enjoying this event and I really felt overwhelmed. People are everywhere, on the dance floor dancing, by the tables eating and chatting and some people

are just hanging around everywhere talking to their friends whom they probably went here with and know the persona behind each mask. Oh shoot! How stupid of me to come here without knowing anyone, well at least with their masks on!

I started panicking because everyone looks the same and different at the same time. How could I find my friends and Blake if I don't know what dresses or masks they're wearing!? Ok, calm down... Breathe in, breathe out, in, out, in, out... Ok there... I then found a bench somewhere near the stage where a band started performing a very familiar song. I thought that song was just something I heard while I was listening to the radio this afternoon so I just brushed it off and scanned my eyes over the crowd to spot familiar faces and then I did.

I spotted Stacey in a black gown by the punch table getting wasted right away. How funny I have punched and broken her nose before. It really felt like ages to me now. I saw Kate Wilson in a blue gown talking to her friends, Anna Jacobs in an orange gown and Gale Colton in a pink gown. I also

recognized the girl with her curled red hair in a very stunning red dress and mask to be Gemma Lewis, the shy girl in my Trig class, dancing shyly with a boy in a dun dun dun... A tux! Yes, a classic tux people, how cliché. I was hoping to see some guy who would wear a suit like the prince in Cinderella or something. You know, just to be different, but well, my hopes of seeing one went down the drain since all of the guys here are wearing one and the same: a classic black tux.

How funny it is that even though we all know that girls have spent hours and hours in fixing themselves to look fabulous for this Masquerade ball and days and some even weeks to find their perfect dress and masks, yet you could still be able to recognize them, unlike the guys (AN: No offense to the guys if there are any reading this. No harm intended.) who just probably borrowed a suit or tux from their dads who use those tuxes in business lunches and meetings and spent minutes to an hour to fix their hair, polish their shoes and look stunning, and yet, you still couldn't be able to recognize them. How unfair is that?

"Lost in thought?" a deep voice from my right ear said. I was so, well, the guy was right, lost in thought that I didn't notice him sit down on my right and lean closely by my ear and whisper. I was snapped out of my reverie and jumped a bit from surprise.

"Uhm... Yes? How may I help you?" I asked shyly. This guy was leaning so close that I could smell his musky scent. I took a whiff. Aahh, cologne... How sexy is that... Wait! I don't even know this guy!

"Looks like you're alone and lonely here. I just want to keep you company." he said. I can't pinpoint who this guy is but I certainly know that I've already heard his voice. He has his hair just like any other guy but you would know that he's not just any other guy and that he is a handsome guy behind his mask. He is wearing a silver mask which gives him a mysterious and a knight-like look and, guess what, a black tux, of course.

"No, it's alright. I'm good. I actually enjoy watching these people having fun. And you should too that's why go find your date and dance with her. This song's," then it clicked, it was the song that Blake

sang before, 'Moment of Truth' by FM Static (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lyj2Ek4dceQ), "This song's really romantic. That's why go find and dance with your date now." I offered him a smile as I remembered Blake singing this song.

"I actually don't have a date and I was thinking that maybe I could dance with you? Or maybe you would want your date to dance with you rather than me with this romantic song as you mentioned?" he asked and I could see a twinkle in his eyes.

"Oh no! I don't have a date! Well, I was actually kind of waiting for this guy but well, I can't find him with all the guys looking alike." I said as I shrugged.

"Hey! I don't look like Justin, you know! My ego is bruised!" he faked hurt.

I laughed at that, "Ok, all guys look the same but at the same time, different. Happy now?"

"I guess so because I don't know what that means and as long as I don't know what that means, I'm good!" he grinned and then continued, "So, you wanna dance with me?"

"Nah. Sorry man. You're really a fun person but I really have to wait for this guy." I said.

"This guy? Is he your boyfriend?" he asked and the cool attitude suddenly became a bit serious.

"I'm not sure. It's actually complicated." I said as I shook my head.

"Don't worry. You can tell me everything, I'm willing to listen, but first, let's dance. This song's really one of my favorites." He gave me a reassuring smile and held his hand out.

I sighed and smiled, "Okay fine." And then we went to the dance floor and placed ourselves in a friendly stance or so I think for me. He held me like a real gentleman would.

"Ok, well here's the summary," I took a deep breath and told him, "He and I came way back since we were 7 but we're not really close friends or anything. We just became special to each other back then until I moved to Florida because of some things and then I came back and became neighbors with him without knowing that we knew each other ever since we

were 7 yrs old. And then ever since he hit me with a soccer ball and laughed at me for my bleeding nose and then I punched him which then caused him a bleeding nose as well, we then became what you could call 'foes'. Not enemies because that was just too cliché. But then just last winter, the people we were dating cheated on us with each other so we came with a plan to get revenge on them by pretending we're dating each other and then some complications happened when another girl appeared while I was actually already falling for him and him for me, or so he says." I took a breather.

"I think he's serious with what he told you. I'm not lying, *coughs*, the guy I mean. He's not lying when he said he loves you." He said with sincerity dripping from his voice.

"Yeah, I know. I trust and believe in him. I already forgave him and that's why I am here even though there are many factors that stopped me from coming." I smiled as I remembered all the obstacles I went through before I came here.

"And what could those factors be?" he asked.

"Well one, I don't really plan on coming here that's why I don't have a dress but I suddenly changed my mind when I received his letter that made me want to come here even in my worn-out jeans and sneakers and shirt that says 'Sorry, I can't stop GRAVITY from making you FALL for me'..."

He laughed, "Wow, you have a shirt like that? I want to see that on you one day."

"Oh please, I was just forced to wear that awhile ago because all of my shirts are in the laundry and that's what's left in my closet because I'm not really using that embarrassing shirt. And anyways, good thing Mrs. Collins gave me this dress and dolled me up, but as she started her car to drive me here, her car ran out of gas. Good thing my dad came home that moment and he drove me here but we experienced a super traffic jam because of goats and cows crossing the street and then I went out the car in this dress and helped the shepherds lead their animals and after that I also became the 'traffic enforcer'!"

"You? In that gown became a shepherd and aided the traffic?" he asked as he laughed and I just nodded my

head in reply as I laughed with him, "I can't believe you did that just to come here!"

"Well, you would do anything in the name of love." I said as I recovered from my laughter and offered him a smile, "What? Cheesy much?"

His laughter died down and he looked at me straight in the eyes. Hazel eyes I noted. "No, I like cheese especially mozzarella."

And we just stared at each other as the song came to an end. And the lights went out and then he kissed me in the dark.

"I'll be right back." He whispered huskily into my ear which sent shivers down my spine. How funny that months of separation could make me forget how his voice sounds and how he smells like even though I was talking and dancing with him for minutes now and not know it's him and yet with just one kiss I could remember everything.

The lights suddenly went on and I was standing on the dance floor partner less with all the couples around me. I looked around if I could still catch

Blake, but it didn't take long for me to notice that he was standing on stage holding an acoustic guitar and is looking straight at me.

"I dedicate this song to the girl whom I call as my guardian angel ever since we were 7 and even now. You are the reason why I am standing here and doing anything for love and because I love mozzarella cheese," he smiled and I snorted an unlady-like snort, "You may snort an unlady-like snort, but I still love you and I was serious when I said that to you before and awhile ago. This song's for you..."

He started strumming and singing the song... (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GuX-F08fwI)

When I see your smile,

Tears run down my face

I can't replace.

And now that I'm strong I have figured out,

How this world turns cold and it breaks through my soul.

And I know I'll find deep inside me,

I can be the one.

I will never let you fall.

I'll stand up for you forever.

I'll be there for you through it all.

Even if saving you sends me to Heaven.

It's okay. It's okay. It's okay.

And seasons are changing,

And waves are crashing,

And stars are falling all for us.

Days grow longer and nights grow shorter,

I can show you I'll be the one.

I will never let you fall.

I'll stand up for you forever.

I'll be there for you through it all.

Even if saving you sends me to Heaven.

'Cause you're my, you're my, my

My true love, my whole heart.

Please don't throw that away.

'Cause I'm here for you.

Please don't walk away and,

Please tell me you'll stay.

Stay.

Use me as you will

Pull my strings just for a thrill

And I know I'll be okay,

Though my skies are turning gray

I will never let you fall

I'll stand up for you forever

I'll be there for you through it all,

Even if saving you sends me to Heaven

I will never let you fall.

I'll stand up with you forever.

I'll be there for you through it all,

Even if saving you sends me to Heaven.

As the song ended, I didn't realize that tears were running down my face. He then came down the stage towards me and whispered to my ear, "Come with me." And then he led me out of the hall, out of the building and out of the school gates.

We walked silently hand in hand until we came to a familiar looking playground where everything started. The park was lit with colorful lights which illuminated the whole area and made the place very romantic.

Blake turned to me, smiled and said, "I met this girl when I was 7 in this same place. She has brown hair, green eyes and has the best smile in the world. When my ice cream with candy sprinkles and marshmallows fell on the floor, she gave me her newly bought vanilla ice cream with a smile on her face which I eventually led me to fall in love with her. During the first part of our last encounter, she was almost hit by a car and then I saved her life and then she gave me this bracelet. She said I was her guardian angel, but she's wrong. She is my guardian angel, you are my guardian angel."

And then he took my hand and put the bracelet that was once mine and was once his and was now mine again.

"We may have hated and hurt each other and pretended to be dating to avenge ourselves to our exes which then led us to more problems and caused us pain before, but I just want you to know that I'm seriously in love with you and I'm not pretending anymore Syd. I love you Sydney Parker." Blake said as he cupped my face delicately in his hands.

"Before, when you proposed the idea of fake dating, I was somehow appalled to pretend that you are my boyfriend and would have a hard time coping but I later on knew that it's not hard to pretend to love you. You're the one whom I wanted because I love you too Blake Collins." I said and then we shared one of our sweetest kiss which would be treasured for a life time.

We then broke apart to breathe and then a question popped in my head.

"Hey, how did you know that it was me when I was wearing this mask? I could've been another girl and

then you suddenly dance and kiss her, you know?" I asked confused.

"Well, actually, I was at this park fixing the lightings and stuff when the traffic jam happened. You know, with the goats and cows. I was intrigued with the animals crossing the street so after I finished my business here, I went to check them out until I saw you shepherdizing." he said while you can see him trying not to laugh.

"Shepherdizing? What kind of a word is that?" I laughed at him which he then also joined.

"Shepherdizing. The action of what shepherds do. That's my created word, babe. You could see that in the future versions of Collins' Dictionary." He said as he lightly kissed my lips.

I just laughed at him, "Whatever you say Mr. Collins." And then we heard the familiar song of the ice cream truck when we were 7 coming towards us. We then looked at each other and already knew what we are buying: Vanilla ice cream.

-The End-

—

How did you guys find it? Please let me know your thoughts and please vote as well.

And also about the next story... I would like to thank the people who took the poll but I have decided to just make a combination of the three choices from there. The next story would be a romantic-action-mature-comedy with a quirky female lead. I hope you would like and support it like this one. My next story would be out by October I think. I decided to type up to the 5th chapter before I post it here. It's entitled "Stalker: For Hire" and here's a sneak peek...

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Target's location: at the foodcourt, 4:37 pm

Activity: Having a double date with his best bud

Notes:

Target caught eating his cheeseburger carelessly while ignoring his bombshell of a date. The said bombshell was touching his arm seductively to get the target's attention, but the target seemed

unaffected and was too absorbed in his cheeseburger with lettuce and tomato and no pickles.

No pickles because...: will be known after further research

Target bit his cheeseburger showing off his pearly whites caught on the DSLR cam. After exactly 7 minutes and 32 seconds, the target finished off his burger and stood up from the table. Pointed to some direction and went off with Agent 001(me) tailing behind unnoticed.

Target went inside the men's restroom and came out after exactly 4 minutes and 29 seconds. DSLR zooming in on his face to capture his face to only see that he looking directly at Agent 001's direction.

Agent 001's location: Behind a plant pot

Activity: panicking and trying to find a place to hide which is nowhere since the plant pot is standing alone at the middle of the floor.

Target's location: 50 ft away from Agent 001

Activity: staring weirdly at Agent 001 and approaching in 11 big steps...

"Excuse me, but uhm... what are you doing behind a plant pot?" Target asked Agent 001.

"Well, uhm ah... I was actually admiring the plant. I was taking its pictures because the plant's fine and smooth outlines are really state of the art. Wouldn't dare miss an image of it." I, Agent 001, said as I took continuous images of the unknown plant.

"You think that the outlines of a cactus are fine and smooth and are state of the art?" Target asked while trying so hard not to laugh.

Oh shoot! What to say? What to say? Who in their right minds would be talking about the pointy and sharp edges of a cactus as fine and smooth and as state of the art! Goodness! But if I stopped taking pictures and took the camera away from my face, he would know my true identity and my mission for today would be abolished. I still don't have enough pictures of him! Oh fudge!

"Well, in a photographer's eye, unappreciated things such as cactuses have their own good qualities and as a photographer, it is my duty to bring out the beauty, the loveliness, splendor, magnificence, radiance and brilliance of this cactus." Ha! My answer would whoa and knock all the photographers off their feet with my heartfelt answer and appreciation of an unappreciated cactus.

"Okayyy... I wish you all the best to bring out the brilliance and beauty of an..." he cannot contain his laughter anymore since he snorted so loud that I wish should've taken a picture of instead of this cactus, "the brilliance and beauty of an artificial and plastic cactus." There he finally said it and laughed right at my face. Oh goodness, good thing I still haven't taken the camera off my face or else he would know who I am while I'm facing another humiliating moment of my life as a...

Stalker For Hire.

—

How was that? Please let me know... You can message me about it or just simply message me, it's cool make

new friends... :) And lastly, I'll leave you guys with some kind of an IQ test... Here it goes...

There was a boy running and playing down the street with his dad not so far behind him when there was a truck about to hit the boy. The father saw this and got in the way to save his son and pushed him to the side. The dad was hit and died but the boy was alive and was just wounded. The witnesses brought the boy to the hospital and then the doctor who attended to them told the people, "Don't worry everyone. I'll take care of him. He's my son..."

Who's the doctor? Answers would be posted on my next story, so stay tuned!... :D

About the Author

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